

**Comintern 7th World
Congress Part 1:**

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SEVENTH WORLD CONGRESS
COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

COLLECTED

*special preface by
G. DIMITROV
exclusive to this edition*

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REPORT

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REPORT OF THE SEVENTH WORLD
CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST
INTERNATIONAL



G. DIMITROV

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REPORT OF THE SEVENTH WORLD CONGRESS

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PREFACE

THE decisions of the Seventh World Congress are thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Marx and Engels and their great continuators, Lenin and Stalin.

There can be no doubt but that in the long run these decisions will meet with full understanding in the ranks of the working class of this country, the cradle of the International of Marx and Engels, and that, despite all obstacles and sabotage, millions of workers will take up the struggle to carry these decisions into execution.

It is of vital importance and a matter of honour in the highest degree for every class-conscious worker to come out in favour of establishing national and international unity in the working class. Let there be unity against the class enemy, against the offensive of capital, against fascism and imperialist war—unity in the struggle for the victory of socialism in one's own country and throughout the entire world!

J. Dimitroff

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No. 4

SEVENTH WORLD CONGRESS OF
THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

WILHELM PIECK

Report on the Activities of
the Executive Committee of
the Communist International

JULY 26th, 1935

VERBATIM OFFICIAL REPORT

MODERN BOOKS LIMITED, LONDON

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Historical Test of the Two Paths of Development

COMRADES, seven years of hard and costly struggle waged by the toiling masses against their oppressors and their exploiters separate the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International from the Seventh. These seven years have brought about a great change in the relation of class forces all over the world and have provided the proletariat with rich revolutionary experiences.

Our Sixth World Congress was faced with the decisive question: Whither is international development tending?

This question likewise faced the Congress of the Second International which was being held in Brussels at the same time. It was also being asked by the bourgeois economists and politicians.

It was the time of the relative, partial stabilization of capitalism, when industry and commerce had surpassed the pre-war level and were experiencing a boom.

What reply did the Social-Democrats give to the question as to the prospects of international development?

Because capitalism had to a certain extent succeeded in getting back into its swing, because production, technique and commerce were on the upgrade and relations between the imperialist powers had been regulated by a system of international treaties, the Social-Democratic leaders concluded that the era of revolutions and wars had come to an end, that the Bolsheviks and their theory and practice had suffered bankruptcy and that the Soviet Union would have to capitulate to the international bourgeoisie or perish.

But the Social-Democrats also drew a further conclusion: since an era of "organized capitalism," of permanent prosperity and peaceful development is impending, the Marxist theory of the class struggle and of the violent overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie has become antiquated and must be replaced by the theory of peaceful growth into socialism by means of strengthening the power of the state, which allegedly stands above classes, economic peace and participation in coalition governments.

But this was the position not only of official Social-Democracy. Its influence penetrated even into our ranks. It was the Right elements in the Sections of the Communist International who defended the theory that the trend of international development was towards strengthening the stabilization of capitalism, that capitalism had succeeded in re-adjusting itself and that the development of technique was creating the possibility of a new rise of capitalism. The Rights also asserted that an early victory of socialism in the Soviet Union was not to be counted on and that a new rise of the revolutionary tide in the near future was not to be expected.

As against these Social-Democratic and Right opportunist conceptions of the course of development in the Soviet Union, Comrade Stalin—basing himself on the Leninist theory that it is possible for one country alone to build a socialist society with its own forces and that the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union is of great international importance—led the Soviet Union along the path of industrialization and the collectivization of peasant farming.

In opposition to the Social-Democratic and Right opportunist conceptions that the capitalist stabilization was a durable and firm one, that capitalism had triumphed and that a peaceful development without crises was possible, Comrade Stalin, in December 1927, pictured the following prospect:

"From stabilization itself, from the fact that production is growing, from the fact that commerce is growing, from the fact that technical progress and productive possibilities are increasing, whereas the world market, the limits of that market and the spheres of influence of the individual imperialist groups are remaining more or less stable—from this a most profound and acute crisis of world capitalism is springing, pregnant with new wars and threatening the existence of stabilization of any kind."*

Comrade Stalin said:

"The fact that the murder of Sacco and Vanzetti could give rise to the demonstrations of the working class undoubtedly goes to show that deep down in the depths of the working class there have accumulated revolutionary energies that are seeking a pretext, an occasion, sometimes an apparently most insignificant occasion to burst forth and overwhelm the capitalist regime."†

* Stalin, *Report to the Fifteenth Congress to the C.P.S.U.*

† *Ibid.*

On the basis of this correct Marxist-Leninist analysis of the world situation given by Comrade Stalin, the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International, as against the Social-Democrats and Right opportunists, laid down an orientation to the effect that the impending new third period of post-war development was one that would be marked by a new revolutionary upsurge and by the shattering of the stabilization of capitalism. We pointed out that what was impending was not a peaceful development, but an accentuation of the class struggle and the growing danger of a new imperialist war.

Who was Right: We or the Social-Democrats?

The Social-Democrats and the Right opportunists have suffered bankruptcy; their theories have been miserably shipwrecked.

The prospect of world development outlined by the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International, the prospect of the victorious building of socialism in the Soviet Union and the shattering of capitalist stabilization have been confirmed by the whole course of development.

The period that has now elapsed witnessed a turning point in the whole course of world development. In the Soviet Union this period was one of hurricane progress, a period of victory for socialism. In the capitalist countries it was marked by uninterrupted decline, by an economic crisis of unexampled profundity, by a futile search for a way out of the crisis, and by the accentuation of the general crisis of capitalism.

Economically and politically, the Soviet Union has become a mighty socialist Great Power, exerting a growing influence on the whole course of world development. The capitalist world, on the contrary, has been enfeebled by the crisis and is being shaken to its foundations by profound and insurmountable antagonisms between classes and states, antagonisms the development of which is ripening the conditions for the overthrow of the power of the exploiting classes.

The revolutionary movement of the toilers in the capitalist countries has steadily grown during these seven years. The Communist Parties, which issued correct slogans to the masses and directed them towards the struggle, have grown and in an increasing number of countries are becoming an important factor in political life.

The great historical swing of the masses from reformism to

communism, from support of capitalism to a struggle for socialism, has begun.

In my report on the activities of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, I shall stress two large groups of questions: the results of the work carried on by the Communists among the masses and the development of our Party work.

For the sake of clarity, I shall divide the period covered by the report into three stages, corresponding to the development of the class struggle and the prevalence in each stage of definite forms of the revolutionary movement:

- (1) The maturing of a new upsurge in the revolutionary movement.
- (2) The revolutionary movement in the years of greatest crisis.
- (3) The shift of the socialist workers towards a united front with the Communists.

I. THE MATURING OF A NEW UPSURGE IN THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

The events that immediately followed the Sixth World Congress confirmed our analysis of the prospects of the revolutionary movement. We were right when we said that the development of the revolution in China, the uprising in Indonesia, the gigantic demonstrations in Europe and America against the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti, the general strike in Great Britain in 1926, the July events in Vienna in 1927 and the great spread of the strike movement in most of the capitalist countries that began in 1927 were symptoms of the beginning of a new revolutionary upsurge. We foretold the continuance of this upsurge, which is not divided by a Chinese Wall from the revolutionary crisis. The Congress set the Sections of the Communist International the task of organizing and leading the growing struggle of the toilers against the exploiting classes.

The Economic and Political Struggles of the Proletariat.

Within a few months after the Sixth Congress a wave of economic strikes, such as had not been witnessed for a long time, broke out in all the European countries. In Lodz, there

began one of the biggest textile workers' strikes in the history of the Polish working-class movement, which turned into a general strike of the proletariat of Lodz. In the Ruhr, 200,000 workers fought for five weeks for an increase in wages. In Northern France, the textile workers went on strike. The parliamentary elections in Germany, Poland and France showed a considerable increase in the number of votes cast for the Communists, which was evidence of the growing political character of the stir that had begun.

This new revolutionary upsurge was by no means confined to the European countries. It was reflected in the anti-imperialist and the agrarian revolution in China and in the national revolutionary and working-class movement in India.

The movement showed that the broad masses of the toilers, who had recovered from the defeats of the years 1921-23, were not willing to accept the further impairment of their conditions brought about by rationalization and the general crisis of capitalism. It was true that capitalist production was sharply on the upgrade; but the condition of the working class was growing markedly worse. It was true that a section of the employed workers were receiving higher wages than in the earlier post-war years: but, on the other hand, exploitation due to rationalization had become incredibly intensified and a large number of workers had been forced out of the production process.

The Socialists talked about "prosperity," but unemployment increased. The Socialists talked about "economic democracy," but sweating in the factories was becoming unendurable. The Social-Democrats prated about "organized capitalism" which was overcoming its internal difficulties, but class antagonisms were growing daily more acute and were resulting in a growth of the class struggle.

The Social-Democrats in all countries placed themselves entirely at the service of the development of capitalist economy. The prospects they held out of the development of capitalist economy into socialism they deduced from the growth and success of capitalism at that time. Hence their theory of the possibility of "permanent prosperity," of a "development without crises," of "organized capitalism," and "industrial democracy," under which the workers and the employers were to be "equal parties" in the settlement of economic questions. In some countries the Social-Democrats called this "constructive socialism," in accordance with which the growth of capi-

talist economy, it was supposed, would lead to socialism by way of parliamentary democracy and coalition governments.

Guided by these views, the Social-Democrats strove for still closer relations with the bourgeois state, and in Germany, Great Britain and Denmark took part in the capitalist governments. Furthermore, the Social-Democrats became interlocked with the heads of the trusts and had posts on boards of directors conferred on them by the bourgeoisie. The natural consequence of this was that the Social-Democrats advocated restricting the class struggle and industrial peace and endeavoured to bar strikes by the workers. All matters affecting the economic interests of the working class were to be decided by state arbitration boards.

From this position of the Social-Democratic leaders, and in view of the commanding position held by the bourgeoisie in relation to the working class, it followed automatically that the proletariat would have been completely delivered over to the tender mercies of the bourgeoisie and would have remained without any leadership whatsoever in its economic struggles, had not the Communists vigorously opposed by the bourgeoisie, remained without any leadership whatsoever in its economic struggles, had not the Communists vigorously opposed by the bourgeoisie, the collaboration of the Social-Democrats with the bourgeoisie and had they not attempted to organize a revolutionary leadership of the economic and political struggles.

Because of the necessity of defending the vital interests of the toiling masses, of intensifying their ability to fight increasing exploitation and oppression, because of the necessity of rallying the masses for this struggle, there devolved on the Communists, as the Eleventh Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in 1922 stated, the task of laying down a more precise and distinct

"political line of their own, fundamentally differing from the line of the reformists both on all general political questions (war, attitude towards the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, China, India, Egypt, etc.) and on questions of the day-to-day struggle of the working class (against arbitration, against wage reductions, against a longer working day, against supporting the capitalists in the matter of rationalization, against 'industrial peace,' etc.)."

In tactics, this political line of the Communists found expression in the slogan "class against class"—the class of proletarians against the class of the bourgeoisie.

The tactics of "class against class" were directed against the *bloc* of the Social-Democrats with the bourgeoisie and aimed at destroying the *bloc* of the Social-Democratic leaders with the bourgeoisie. These tactics were not aimed against the united front of the Communists with the Socialists for the struggle against the bourgeoisie, but, on the contrary, presupposed it. They aimed at creating a revolutionary leadership of the economic and political struggles of the proletariat.

The resolution of the E.C.C.I. of February 1928 on the tactics of "class against class" in Great Britain made this quite clear.

It said that

"Inasmuch as large strata of the working class still follow the reformist leaders, it is absolutely essential to propose a united front on both a national and local scale, in order once more to expose the leaders of the Labour Party and the trade unions, who prefer unity with the capitalists to unity with the revolutionary workers."

Laying down a sharp line of demarcation between the reformist and Communist policies, which is absolutely necessary and one of the essential foundations of our tactics of "class against class," by no means precludes Communists, while conducting their independent election campaigns, from undertaking at elections—for instance, in Great Britain—to support the Labour candidates who vote in favour of the urgent demands of the working class, or in France, concluding election agreements with the Socialists in special cases in order to prevent the election of reactionary candidates. Unless such a united front of the workers against the capitalists is created it is impossible to defend effectively the vital interests of the workers in the struggle against the bourgeoisie.

The tactics of "class against class" strengthened the Communist Parties and enabled them to appear before the working class as an independent force in the leadership of the class struggle. In Great Britain, the Communists for the first time began to carry on big mass campaigns independently all over the country. In France, the Communists set themselves up as an independent factor against the Left *bloc*. It was only by determinedly pursuing an independent line that the Communist Party of Germany was able to carry with it large sections of the masses who were turning away from Social-Democracy, to organize tremendous strike actions and demonstrations and to create a powerful front of revolutionary class struggle.

But these successes must not blind us to the fact that in pursuing these tactics a number of sectarian mistakes were committed. While the Communists in *Great Britain* were right in putting up their independent candidates against the Labour Party leaders in the parliamentary elections and fighting on their behalf, it was wrong for the small Communist Party to concentrate all its attention on its own candidates and to make but little effort to have candidates put up by labour conferences of local trade union and Labour Party branches. While the Communists in *Germany* acted rightly in definitely dissociating themselves from the Social-Democrats and conducting a ruthless struggle against Zörgiebel and Severing, it was wrong of the Communists to dissociate themselves also from the Social-Democratic workers and to call them "little Zörgiebels." While it was right for the Communists in 1928 and 1929 in Germany, France, Great Britain and a number of other countries, in view of the conditions that existed at that time, not to make proposals for a united front to the Social-Democratic leaders, it was wrong to interpret the decisions of the Communist International as meaning that our comrades must not make such proposals to the local organizations of the Social-Democrats and of the reformist trade unions.

Owing to this defective application of our tactics of "class against class," and frequently even to the distorted idea that these tactics supposedly precluded the united front, our Sections in this stage of the struggle failed to achieve the success they might have achieved. It was only when the upsurge in the strike movement began and the Social-Democrats opposed this movement, set the state arbitration machinery in motion and began to stifle the strikes, that the revolutionary tactics of the Communists gained the sympathies of large numbers of workers. Our Sections began to understand how important for the struggle of the workers was the organization of independent strike committees elected by the workers themselves.

True, the Communists here came into conflict with the reformist trade union leaders, who, by referring to trade union discipline and by threatening expulsion, tried to prevent the Communists from organizing the strike struggle. But under no circumstances could the Communists renounce the struggle on behalf of the demands of the masses, and the organization of their struggles, out of respect for such trade union discipline. Without violations of the trade union dis-

cipline exercised by the reformist leaders, and without the organization of independent strike committees, there would have been no Lodz strike, no struggle in the Ruhr, and no powerful strike movement in Czechoslovakia.

In view of the policy of economic peace pursued by the Social-Democrats, had there been no Communist leadership of the strike struggle the bourgeoisie even in the years of economic boom would have succeeded to a far greater degree in carrying out their plan of lowering wages, lengthening the working day and worsening labour conditions. Many thousands of workers, if they had failed to see anybody leading their struggles, would have withdrawn disappointed from the class struggle.

And so, as in 1914, the Communists once more saved the honour of the working-class movement, the honour of Socialism.

The Communists, who assumed the lead of a number of large strikes and numerous small strikes, organized picket lines and demonstrations and raised the masses from economic struggles to political struggles, therein displayed a very strong fighting spirit and themselves bore the main brunt of the sacrifices. Thanks to this, they gained considerable influence among the working-class masses and in all the mass organizations of the workers.

The Consequences of Sectarian Mistakes.

But here too, the Communists committed many sectarian errors. They were unable to clinch their influence organizationally in the reformist organizations and among the unorganized workers. By organizing strike struggles, the Communists strengthened the spirit of class struggle among the proletariat, although the Social-Democrats were advocating economic peace and preaching "Mondism" and the like. Nevertheless, the Communists frequently committed the mistake of continuing a strike even after the majority of the strikers had returned to work. As a result, they frequently isolated themselves from the broad working-class masses.

With the help of the slogan demanding independent leadership of strikes by the revolutionary minority, the Communists helped to bring about strikes and to free revolutionary trade union work from the fetters of the reformist trade union apparatus. But in carrying out this slogan the first essential task of a revolutionary minority was ignored, namely, to secure

the consent of the majority of the workers of a given factory to the declaration of a strike and to create an independent strike leadership elected by the strikers themselves.

Although the Communists acted rightly in coming out against the traditional aristocratic attitude of the reformists towards the unorganized workers and in favour of drawing the unorganized workers into the strikes and on to strike committees, nevertheless, a number of Communists, particularly in Germany, went so far as to underrate the importance of the organized workers and the influence of the reformist trade unions not only among the organized, but also among the unorganized workers.

The Red International of Labour Unions was right in setting the task of smashing the monopolist claim of the reformist trade union bureaucracy to decide on economic struggles, a monopoly it utilized only in order to prevent such struggles. But the decision of the Strassburg Conference at the beginning of 1929 went beyond this aim when it declared that "it is the task of the strike leadership and strike committees independently to prepare for and lead the strike struggles *in spite of and in opposition to the reformist trade unions*." This also applies to the instruction that "in the election of committees of action in the case of lockouts and of strike committees and other organs of struggle, all persons connected with Social-Democracy and the trade union bureaucracy are to be rejected on the grounds that they are strike-breakers."

The experience of the struggle has also shown that the reformist trade union leaders, under the pressure of the increasing sentiment of the masses in favour of a strike, have not always been able to reject the strike, and therefore the tactics of the united front were both feasible and necessary. The opportunists in our ranks advocated the view that in the matter of strikes, pressure must be brought to bear on the reformist trade union bureaucracy through the trade union members, but that in the event of the trade union leaders rejecting the strike, their decisions must be abided by. It goes without saying that we had to combat this opportunist view. But, on the other hand, it was a mistake to think that it was opportunism to exert pressure on the reformist trade union bureaucracy at all through the trade union members, which was the interpretation given to our opposition to the Brandlerite slogan, "Zwingt die Bonzen" ("Bring Pressure on the Bureaucrats") in Germany and later in other countries. The revolutionary minority concentrated all its attention on independent leader-

ship of strikes, but in doing so they lost sight of such a duty as participating in strike movements led by the reformist trade union leaders, as work facilitating the acquisition of a firm influence over the majority of the workers participating in these strike movements.

In spite of these sectarian mistakes, the influence of the Communists among the organized working-class masses grew very rapidly. It was for this reason that the reformist trade union leaders began to expel Communists from the trade unions in Germany, Great Britain, the United States and in a number of other countries.

The Communist Party in Germany adopted quite correct fighting tactics against these measures, recommending its followers to sign the declarations demanded by the reformist trade union leaders to the effect that they would submit to trade union discipline, in order thereby to make it possible for them to remain in the trade unions. The growing indignation of the revolutionary workers over the expulsions and over the reformist policy of splits induced many Communist functionaries to issue a pseudo-radical and utterly sectarian appeal not to pay membership dues. Naturally, this was immediately taken advantage of by the reformist trade union leaders in order to proceed still more vigorously with the expulsion of the opposition. The reformists pursued similar splitting tactics in the sports and educational organizations.

This policy of the reformists demanded the organized consolidation of the revolutionary trade union opposition, particularly in Germany and Poland; and indeed, in 1928 and in 1929, certain successes were achieved. But here again a sectarian mistake was committed: the Revolutionary Trade Union opposition was transformed into new trade unions, and, as a result, found itself isolated from the greater mass of members of the reformist trade unions. Another mistake was that our Sections in other countries mechanically took over this decision of the German Communist Party, ignoring the absolutely different concrete situation existing in their own particular countries.

The most glaring example of sectarianism in the trade union movement was provided in Great Britain, where in the face of the sharp attacks of the Right members of the General Council and the vacillations of the Left trade union leaders, the Communists adopted such clumsy and sectarian tactics that the Minority Movement actually fell to pieces. Adopting

the course of independently leading the economic struggles, the Communists, as a result of former Right mistakes and the inadequate organizational consolidation of the Minority Movement, transferred their main work from the trade union groups to individual members and from the trade unions to the unorganized workers, and set up their scanty forces against the whole trade union movement. These mistakes were aggravated by the fact that the Communists regarded the Minority Movement as the germ of new trade unions and discontinued recruiting workers for the trade unions, issuing appeals to join the ranks of the Minority Movement. It must be borne in mind that these mistakes were committed by our comrades in a country where the reformist trade unions possess the oldest traditions. In such a state of affairs, the Communists were bound to become entirely isolated from the trade union movement, and the Minority Movement collapsed. It is only with great difficulty that our British comrades, having realized their mistakes and correspondingly altered their trade union policy, are managing to regain their influence in the trade union movement.

It was precisely the fact that the strength of the traditions that bind the working-class masses to the old trade union organizations was underrated, and that the main stress in our work was laid on strengthening the Red trade unions and on building revolutionary trade unions, that resulted in the Communists for several years neglecting work in the reformist trade unions, although such work was quite feasible. It was natural that this should have very severely hindered the spread of our influence among the masses of organized trade unionists.

In spite of all this, the fact remains that in the pre-crises period, especially when the economic strike was the principal form of development of the class struggle, the Communists were the chief initiators and leaders of the strike struggle in a number of countries. During this period the Communist Parties gained in political strength and their ideological influence among the masses markedly increased. But they still did not become a force that was fully able to utilize the new situation that has come about with the outbreak of the economic crisis in the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.

This leads me to the second stage of the struggle in the period under review, the stage embracing the revolutionary movement in the years of greatest crisis.

II. THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN THE YEARS OF GREATEST CRISIS

In the autumn of 1929 the industrial crisis began in America, which became interwoven with the agrarian crisis in the peasant countries and the crisis in the colonies, and which spread with extraordinary rapidity all over the capitalist world.

This crisis brought appalling misery to the toiling masses. Many millions of industrial workers and office employees were discharged from factories, mines, and offices. According to the Bulletin of the Labour Office of the League of Nations, the number of unemployed in thirty-four industrial countries alone increased from 6,538,000 in 1929 to 29,042,000 in 1932. According to official figures, the number of unemployed in the United States in 1932 reached 12,000,000 and according to the Hamilton Institute, as much as 17,000,000. In Germany, according to official data, there were 7,000,000 unemployed in 1932.

In every country the wages of employed workers fell. Millions of workers were put on part-time work with corresponding reductions in wages. Skilled workers were reduced to the standard of living of unskilled workers and employed workers to the standard of living of unemployed workers.

According to the German Government Bureau of Statistics, the total wages of German workers, clerical workers and government employees fell from M.44,500,000,000 in 1929 to M.26,000,000,000 in 1932. Total wages in the United States fell from \$17,200,000,000 in 1929 to \$6,800,000,000 in 1932.

Not a single worker or office employee in a single capitalist country was certain of the morrow. Millions were condemned to hunger and cold. Millions became beggared and homeless, spending their nights in parks, public squares and under bridges. The working class, which created all the wealth of modern society, sank to a state of poverty unknown to the memory of man.

But no less became the poverty and want of the toiling peasantry. In order to plunder the peasant masses, monopoly capital, the trusts and the banks lowered the price of the produce of peasant agriculture, while maintaining the former level of prices for manufactured goods. The banks ruthlessly collected interest on loans and mortgage debts. The burden of taxation steadily increased since the state made subsidies to the insolvent banks and trusts.

This policy of plundering the peasants accelerated the deterioration of peasant farming, totally ruining tens of thousands of peasant households and condemning millions of households to languish in misery. In a number of countries elements of the feudal system have been restored or strengthened. The poorest strata of the peasantry have fallen prey to the usurers. The bailiff has become a permanent "guest" in the peasant farms. Famine devours whole agricultural regions in Poland, North-Eastern Japan, and the Carpathian Ukraine. Poverty and want have become the lot of a large section of the American farmers.

The horror of the situation is emphasized by the fact that warehouses and corn-bins in all countries are bursting with grain, grain is being used as fuel for locomotives, coffee is being dumped into the sea, while the producer of these commodities—the peasant—starves. . . .

No better is the situation of the *urban petty bourgeoisie*, whose impoverishment is taken advantage of by the trusts and big capitalists in order to seize the property of the petty bourgeois. The petty-bourgeois intellectuals are steadily losing their means of subsistence, thousands of teachers, doctors, lawyers and especially engineers and agronomists are leading a wretched existence as unemployed. Knowledge and ability lose all meaning when the capitalists are unable to derive profit from them.

But still more desperate has become the situation of the *peoples of the colonies and the dependent countries*, who owing to the still greater reduction in the price of the product of their labour under the pressure of imperialist monopoly, and as the result of the high price of manufactured articles, have been literally ruined. Hundreds of millions of peasants in the colonies are starving. Epidemics, which were considered to have been eradicated, break out with new virulence and exterminate the physically-exhausted population. The hunger and want of the unemployed of China, India, Indo-China and Africa, for whom no relief of any kind is provided, baffles description.

The avarice of the imperialist bourgeoisie, which has no concern for the starving masses, started a steadily rising tide of movements of the toilers against their exploiters and tormentors. These movements have become an increasing menace to the supremacy of the imperialists in the colonies and the dependent countries.

The Imperialist Bourgeoisie is seeking a way out in War and Fascism

The imperialist bourgeoisie cannot confine itself to plundering the toiling masses of its own countries and the colonial possessions it had seized. The accentuation of the class struggles, the shrinkage of profits, bankruptcies and the decline of foreign trade drive the bourgeoisie to make preparations for a war in order to increase their profits by seizing and plundering foreign countries. These preparations are simultaneously and primarily designed for the destruction of the Soviet Union, the home, the basis and the bulwark of the proletarian revolution. Thus a frantic race for armaments begins.

Japan seizes Manchuria in order to create a stepping-off place for a war against the Soviet Union. She razes Chapei, the suburb of Shanghai, to the ground, in order to bring China under her influence. War breaks out between Paraguay and Bolivia.

In Germany, the most reactionary, chauvinistic and nationalist elements of finance capital set up a fascist dictatorship. They propagate "the myth of blood and honour," the "racial theory," the theory of belligerent German imperialism. They preach a crusade against the Soviet Union and for the extermination of Marxism all over the world.

Italian imperialism makes preparations for the annexation of Abyssinia, thereby creating a new centre of war. Indeed, when it is a question of increasing the profits of the bourgeoisie, or, all the more, when it is a question of arresting the decline of profits, the bourgeoisie is prepared to commit the most heinous, gruesome and bloody crimes.

Nevertheless, the growing revolutionary upsurge and the increasing sympathy of the toiling masses for the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and the unprecedented plundering of the masses, the frantic arming for a new war and the organization of fascist forces by the bourgeoisie, on the other, go to show that tremendous class conflicts are impending. At the same time, they indicate the weakness of the bourgeoisie.

The first symptoms of the approach of these conflicts were manifested as early as 1930 and 1931. In *Spain*, the powerful and spontaneous mass movement in the spring of 1931 overthrew the fascist dictatorship and drove out King Alfonso. It was the beginning of the Spanish bourgeois-democratic revolution.

In *China*, a new wave of anti-imperialist and agrarian revolution started, which found expression in the formation of Soviets and the creation of a powerful Red Army.

In *Indo-China*, a revolt of the peasant masses broke out against the yoke of imperialism.

But a profound disturbance of the imperialist system was proceeding in the largest imperialist countries as well. In the spring of 1931, the Eleventh Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International was already able to record that in Germany the conditions for a revolutionary crisis were maturing and that in Poland the elements of a revolutionary crisis were multiplying. In the autumn of 1932, the Twelfth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International affirmed that the temporary partial stabilization of capitalism had come to an end and that the transition to a new round of revolutions and wars was under way.

In affirming this, the Twelfth Plenum based itself on the continued rise of the revolutionary upsurge, on the maturing of the revolutionary crisis in Germany and Poland, on the revolutions in China and Spain and on the offensive undertaken by Japan against China. The Plenum also based itself on the fact that the Versailles system was being profoundly undermined, that the agreement between the victorious states against Germany had collapsed, as had the agreement between Great Britain, Japan, America and France for the joint exploitation of China. This was accompanied by the maturing of a new imperialist war, while at the same time the political, economic and military power of the Soviet Union was being consolidated.

The Working Class is Seeking a Way Out in Revolution

The Communist International drew the attention of all toilers to the fact that in the Soviet Union the dictatorship of the proletariat has put an end to unemployment in the towns and to pauperism in the country, that the condition of the toiling masses was improving from day to day and that in the Soviet Union socialism was victorious.

The Soviet Union showed the toiling masses the only path of salvation from poverty, want and incredible suffering. This is the path of salvation from fascism and war.

The task that the Communist International laid upon its Sections was to make the mighty example given to the toiling

masses of the world, by the Soviet Union known to these masses, to make the great lesson afforded by this example part of the flesh and blood of these masses.

This example was to signify that the toiling masses must abandon all the fraudulent theories of the bourgeois and Social-Democratic, that inculcate in the working class the idea that since crises are natural to capitalism, the working class should meekly consent to bear the whole burden of the crisis; theories that inculcate in the toiling masses the idea that since wars are natural to capitalism, they cannot prevent them; theories that inculcate in the toiling masses the idea that since the development of decaying capitalism is leading to fascism, the latter is inevitable.

The immediate tactical task of the Communists during the crisis was to prevent the burden of the crisis being laid on the backs of the starving masses by organizing the struggle. The central strategic point of the struggle in connection with these tactics lay in Germany.

But the working class entered this struggle internally divided. In every country, the Social-Democratic Party, the oldest and largest workers' party, was corroded by the rust of reformism and, in the conditions of the crisis, stood for class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. Only the comparatively young and, in many countries, still insufficiently influential Communist Party stood for an irreconcilable class struggle.

Class Collaboration with the Bourgeoisie or Class Struggle.—This controversy was still rending the ranks of the proletariat and enfeebling its forces.

The Communists took the lead of numerous large and small actions of the workers and peasants and called upon them to fight. The Social-Democrats, on the contrary, declared that under the conditions of the crisis a fight against dismissals and wage reductions was senseless.

The Struggle of the Unemployed

In spite of the Social-Democrats, the Communists in a number of countries succeeded in raising *the movement of the unemployed*—that most ill-treated section of the toilers—to a high level. In countries where government unemployment insurance existed, as in Germany, Great Britain, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Austria, the Communists took the lead of the struggle against attempts to impair the insurance system,

against a reduction of relief and of the duration of relief, and against the replacement of unemployment insurance by crisis relief. In the United States, where there is no government unemployed insurance, the Communists developed a campaign for the introduction of such insurance, drafted an insurance bill, organized demonstrations, meetings and congresses on its behalf and gained the support of trade unions and advanced intellectuals for this.

In all countries the Communists led the fight against evictions of unemployed for non-payment of rent and in favour of the granting of additional relief by the municipalities in money and kind—potatoes, coal, and so forth.

This fight was an extremely difficult one. It was only by the creation of a network of unemployed organizations and by big demonstrations, in the course of which sharp clashes with the police frequently took place, that it became possible to wring concessions from the bourgeois state and its organs in favour of the unemployed.

As a result of this struggle, it became possible in a number of countries to ease the lot of a section of the unemployed and to offer vigorous resistance to the impairment of social insurance legislation. However, it was not possible to prevent such impairment.

If, in spite of the stubborn fight put up by the advanced section of the unemployed, this movement was not more widely developed and converted into a struggle of the broad masses of the toilers, and if, in 1932, the unemployed movement in a majority of the countries even began to subside, it was owing to the following causes:

1. The criminal sabotage and the direct resistance shown by the Social-Democratic leaders to the demands and the movement of the unemployed prevented the securing of a tangible improvement in the conditions of the vast mass of the unemployed, which evoked disappointment and passivity in the latter.

2. The Social-Democratic Party prevented support being given to the unemployed movement by the strike movement of the employed workers, who remained passive in face of the poverty, want and starvation of the unemployed.

3. We succeeded in enlisting only an insignificant part of the unemployed about ten or twenty per cent., in the active struggle the majority of the unemployed remaining passive.

4. Not all the forms and methods of struggle were tried

which might have aroused public opinion much more powerfully and have won the greater sympathy of the whole people for the struggle of the unemployed. This could not be secured by political demonstrations alone, which at times did not even pursue a concrete aim. We all remember what a great impression the hunger-march in Great Britain and the United States produced throughout the world. But how much greater would the impression on public opinion have been if all the hungry unemployed, together with their wives and children, had really come on to the streets with the simple demand for bread and support.

5. Nor were the Communists able to popularize slogans the concrete nature of which might have mobilized the unemployed in the struggle against capital, or to link up the masses in the factories with this struggle.

We are referring to such demands as the confiscation of stocks in favour of the unemployed, extra taxation of the capitalists, taking over factories that were standing idle or in which wholesale discharges were taking place, and so forth. It is true that in certain countries such demands were put forward by the Communists, but in most cases this was not done in good time, they were not popularized on a large enough scale, and what is most important, no serious fight on their behalf was undertaken.

6. Not all the ways of securing public and government support for the unemployed were discovered. I should like here to quote only one example taken from the Soviet Union. In 1921, when famine raged in the Soviet Union, the masses of the people compelled the priests of the reactionary Christian church to surrender to the masses, for the purpose of assisting the starving, the gold and silver they had hoarded. The masses of the people in Germany, the United States, Austria, Poland, and other countries should have similarly compelled the wealthy, the Church and the government to open up their treasures for the unemployed who were dying of starvation.

What is also beyond doubt is that the fatalistic attitude of the Social-Democratic leaders that nothing could avail against the elementary force of the crisis exerted its influence on the whole proletariat. In the leadership of the unemployed movement there was far too much sheer agitation and far too little initiative in the organization of a real struggle. The Communists, who had been able, it is true, to organize thousands and tens of thousands of unemployed, had still not learned to draw millions into this movement.

That is why, when the fascists in Germany began to organize charity soup kitchens for the unemployed, a part of the unemployed swallowed this bait, were duped by the propaganda of *Volksgemeinschaft* (the community of interest of the whole people) and turned away from the revolutionary struggle. The activity of the movement also subsided in other countries.

The Strike Movement.

I now come to the *strike movement* in the period of the crisis. That the Communists were not able to mobilize the industrial workers for the strike struggle in the early years of the crisis (1930 to 1932), and that the latter remained deaf to the strike calls of the Communists was owing to the sabotage of every strike movement by the reformist trade union leaders and to the Social-Democratic ideology that held that no strikes could be conducted during the crisis. The influence of the Communists among the trade union workers in the factories was also very much diminished by the mass expulsion of Communists from the trade unions.

But finally, in 1932, the workers in a number of countries nevertheless began more and more frequently to undertake spontaneous fights. Faced with the growing strike sentiment of the masses, the trade union leaders felt themselves obliged to join in strike struggles and even to lead strikes.

In *Poland*, 50,399 workers went on strike against wage cuts, dismissals and the closing down of factories in 1930, and 106,985 in 1931. In 1932 the number rose to 313,934 and in 1933 to 458,399. In a number of instances the workers resorted to stay-in strikes, barricading themselves in the factories in order to prevent them from being shut down and the workers dismissed. In many cases the extraordinary stubbornness of the Polish workers compelled the employers to abandon the intended wage cuts and dismissals. The Communists played an outstanding part in organizing these fights. In this way it was proved to the working class that even during the crisis it is possible to repulse the offensive of capital, and this served both to strengthen the fighting spirit of the workers and to increase the respect enjoyed by the Communists as organizers of the struggle.

In *Great Britain*, the working class put up considerable resistance to the capitalist offensive from the very beginning of the crisis. In 1930, 307,000 workers went on strike, in 1931—

490,000, and in 1932—379,000. Approximately one-quarter of the strikes ended favourably for the workers, and about thirty-four per cent. ended in compromises. Here also it was proven that successful strikes could be conducted during the crisis.

But in other countries, where the crisis was particularly profound, as in *Germany* and the *United States*, the working class in the early years of the crisis were not in a position to put up any large degree of resistance to wage cuts by means of strikes. An upsurge of the strike movement in the United States began only in 1933, when the number of strikers totalled 774,763. In Germany, after a general lull in the strike movement, it was only in the autumn of 1932 that a big strike of the Berlin transport workers broke out which acquired great political significance. But this strike too was stifled by the Social-Democrats.

What the Communists had warned the workers about from the very beginning of the crisis came to pass: the Social-Democratic policy and strategy resulted in crippling the fighting power of the proletariat and, consequently, in an enormous increase of its misery. This was due to the fact that the workers did not heed the call of the Communists to resist wage cuts and dismissals, to fight for the maintenance and increase of unemployment relief, and thus made it possible for the capitalists to render the conditions of the toilers still more unfavourable and to improve their own position at the latter's expense.

Despite this Social-Democratic policy of preventing big conflicts, groups of advanced toilers time and again resorted to the political struggle against capital and pointed to millions and tens of millions of people the right road to follow.

I shall only recall the big unemployed demonstrations on March 6, 1930, in the United States, in which nearly a million unemployed took part, a number of big demonstrations in Germany in 1930 and 1931, the great unemployed demonstrations in Budapest on September 1, 1930, the farmers' strikes in the United States in 1932, the great march of the veterans on Washington in 1932, the Spanish revolution on April 14, 1931, the strike in the British Navy at Invergordon on September 14, 1931, the mutiny in the Chilean Navy in September 1931, the peasant risings in the Western Ukraine in 1932 and the mutiny on the Dutch warship *De Zeven Provinciën* in February 1933.

But why did these stormy political movements of the toilers remain but a flash in the pan, producing no important results in the struggle for liberation? Why were they not transformed into a political mass struggle against the bourgeois state?

The causes lie in the following four main weaknesses:

1. These movements were largely spontaneous, undertaken without serious preparation, without a joint organization of all forces, without concrete fighting aims. They were only to a minor extent movements in response to the call of the Communist Party.

2. True, the Communist Party endeavoured to provide these movements with concrete slogans, to widen their scope and to raise in them the political consciousness of the masses to a higher plane; but the Social-Democratic Party and the reformist trade unions opposed this with all their might and main. The Communist Parties were still not strong and influential enough to organize the masses who had spontaneously undertaken the political struggle and to give them firm guidance.

3. Communists, Social-Democrats and unorganized workers participated in these movements. These masses, who had entered the struggle spontaneously, would have held together longer and could have been led further in the struggle only if a united front had been created between the Communist and Social-Democratic organizations. But the Social-Democratic Party was opposed to such a united front and rendered it impossible. It would, moreover, have been necessary to create permanent organs to lead the struggle, elected by the masses and consisting of Communists, Socialists and unorganized workers, organs which would have enjoyed sufficient authority among the masses to draw increasingly larger numbers into the struggle and at the same time to ensure revolutionary leadership of the whole movement. Such organs, however, were not created.

4. It is true that the idea of creating such permanent organs was conceived in the unemployed movement. But the city and district unemployed committees formed here and there by the Communists were neither organized on a sufficiently broad basis nor enjoyed sufficient authority among the masses to accomplish this great task. Nowhere did they become in any

way notable political centres, focal points for the sympathies of all the toilers, nor did they become the affair of the whole class. The Communists did not even make any serious attempt to explain to the toilers the meaning and significance of these organs. The consequence was that it became possible for the bourgeoisie and the Social-Democratic Party to represent these organs as "irresponsible" and casual bodies, or as purely affairs of the Communist Party and thus to weaken their influence among the non-Communist workers.

Under the conditions that prevailed in the crisis, the Communist Parties had to assume very big and serious tasks in leading the masses; the Communists had to count in millions and to attempt to include all strata of the toilers in the fighting front. The accomplishment of this task was all the more difficult since before the crisis the Communist Parties in most countries had been numerically weak organizations and exerted influence on a relatively thin stratum of the workers.

The rapid change in the situation, the tremendous growth in the discontent of the masses and the increase of the fascist menace and the menace of war required that the Communists should have constantly reviewed the situation and the rôle played by the various parties, groups and persons and have launched at the proper time the slogans corresponding to the changed situation. This complexity of the situation also demanded tremendous organizational work. In fulfilling these tasks the Communists gave many brilliant examples of good work. But in face of the rapid and politically complicated development of events, they often came out too late with their slogans, did not always correctly estimate the relation of class forces and frequently persisted in slogans and fighting methods which somewhat earlier had been correct, but which had become antiquated with the change in the situation.

It is true that the Communist Parties had grasped the important decisions of the Sixth World Congress to the effect that a new revolutionary upsurge was impending. But they often did not sufficiently realize that a revolutionary upsurge is not separated from a revolutionary crisis by a Chinese wall. They often entertained very simplified notions of the manner and means by which the masses of the workers would break with their old reformist leaders and come over to the side of the revolutionary struggle.

In a number of cases the Communists also overestimated the political maturity of the masses and believed that hard and strenuous work was no longer required to train the masses for the political struggle and to convince them of its necessity. They believed that it was sufficient to carry on propaganda in favour of Soviet Government and to explain to the masses the programme which the Communists would carry into effect when they had seized power, in order to persuade the workers to accept their leadership. These false ideas led several Communist Parties to become transformed at times into mere propaganda organs for our programme, instead of combining propaganda in favour of our programme with the task of supplying the masses at the proper time with slogans that would mobilize them for the struggle at the given stage.

These erroneous ideas entertained by numerous Communists manifested themselves primarily in the trade union question and the development of the economic struggle. The Communists who had been expelled from the reformist trade unions adopted a hostile attitude toward the reformist trade unions on the supposition that the more we denounced the reformist organizations for their passivity, their sabotage of strikes and their reformism, the more rapidly would the masses break with them spontaneously and go over to the small trade union skeleton organizations of the Communists.

The Communists failed to note what Comrade Stalin had said on May 9, 1925, to the Moscow Party functionaries :

"If the Communist Parties wish to become a real mass force capable of advancing the revolution, they must link up with the trade unions and rely upon them for support."

Comrade Stalin pointed out that some Communists "do not understand that, good or bad, the rank-and-file worker regards the trade unions as his citadels, his strongholds, which help him to maintain his wages, his working day, and so forth."

And it was precisely in the time of the crisis, when utter misery fell to the lot of the toiling masses, that the rank-and-file worker felt very strongly that his trade union, however bad it might be, was nevertheless able to give him legal aid and certain material assistance even if slight, that his trade union was a definite power—and he therefore did not want to break with it.

In a number of countries the Communists made the mistake

of ignoring these sentiments of the masses, did no work in the trade unions and failed to change their attitude towards the trade unions in good time and to pass from the united front from below to a united front with the organizations. In Germany, certain Communists, in face of the fascist offensive, even spoke of the necessity of "destroying" the reformist trade unions, thereby helping to isolate the Communists from the organized workers.

In America, the Communists for a long time declared that the American Federation of Labor was a purely capitalist strike-breaking organization, they saw only its leader, Green, and overlooked the workers.

In the autumn of 1932, the 12th Plenum of the E.C.C.I. condemned the rather widespread idea that "the trade unions are a school of capitalism." It was only in the autumn of 1932 that the Communist Party of Germany issued to the Communists the slogan of defending the labour organizations and their property, which helped to arouse strong sympathy for the Communists among all members of the trade unions, co-operatives and the Social-Democratic Party. It was with still greater delay—in Germany only even after the advent of Hitler to power—that the Communists issued the clear slogan of defending the Free Trade Unions, followed by the slogan of restoring the Free Trade Unions. It took a long time before the importance of work in the trade unions was grasped by the Communists in the other countries.

On the other hand, a mistake equally as grave as the under-estimation of the fascist danger was the fact that fascism was discerned even where it did not exist. This mistake was due to the fact that a number of Communist writers gave a mechanical interpretation to the declaration of the Sixth Congress that the bourgeoisie was increasingly endeavouring to resort to fascist methods of rule.

In Germany, the Communists for a long time held the view that the Social-Democratic Hermann Müller government was working for fascization, that the Brüning government was already a government of fascist dictatorship. On the other hand, they underrated the Hitler movement, by the assumption that in a country like Germany, where the working class was so highly organized, the Hitlerites could not possibly seize power, and that the petty bourgeois masses who were spontaneously flocking to the Hitlerites would just as rapidly turn away from them.

In Austria, as early as 1929, the Schober government was declared to be a fascist government. In Czechoslovakia, the Masaryk-Benes group was branded by the Communists as a fascist group. There are many similar instances of erroneous estimates.

These erroneous ideas of the nature of fascism, and the failure to make a serious study of Italian and Polish fascism resulted in the Communists being unable to launch slogans at the proper time calling for the defence of the remnants of bourgeois democracy against fascism, which was assuming the offensive, and to take advantage of the antagonisms within the ranks of the bourgeoisie.

In Germany, the Communists waited until the election of the Speaker of the Prussian Diet in 1932 before they declared that they would vote for the candidates of the Social-Democratic Party and the Centre in order to prevent the election of fascists.

Even in Poland, where after 1926 the Communists studied fascism more diligently than in many another country and issued slogans to the masses calling for struggle against the liquidation of the remnants of bourgeois democratic liberties, the Communists, when the Centre-Left bloc was created, were unable to take advantage of the differences between the government camp and the camp of the bourgeois-democratic opposition.

These mistakes were due to the absolutely false conception that all bourgeois parties are fascist, that there are "no two methods of bourgeois rule," and that it was unseemly for Communists to defend the remnants of bourgeois democracy. As long as we cannot replace bourgeois democracy by proletarian democracy, by the dictatorship of the proletariat, the proletariat is interested in retaining every scrap of bourgeois democracy in order to use it to prepare the masses for the overthrow of the power of capitalism and to achieve proletarian democracy.

Such sectarian views, which have nothing in common either with the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, or with the decisions of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, retarded the growth of the influence of the Communist Parties and especially hampered the work of winning over the Social-Democratic workers for the joint struggle.

Unless these sectarian views are eradicated, it is impossible to establish either a united front with the Social-Democratic

workers or a broad people's front with those toiling masses who are still far from the Communists, but who, nevertheless, can take up with us the struggle against fascism and war, against the offensive of capitalism, for their partial demands and for the defence of the remnants of bourgeois democracy.

The Fight for the Allies of the Proletariat

In this period of our struggle the backwardness of our work of winning allies for the proletariat among the peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie was strongly felt. It is true that we overcame the fundamentally disdainful attitude and the craft arrogance of the old Social-Democratic Parties with respect to the petty bourgeois masses, an attitude which considered it beneath the dignity of the proletariat to bother about the petty bourgeois masses. Yet, if we exclude Poland and the Balkan countries, the Communists in most countries before the outbreak of the crisis had hardly passed beyond the stage of only recognizing in principle the necessity for work among the urban and rural petty bourgeois masses.

In Poland, the Communists have long enjoyed considerable influence among the progressive section of the peasants, who are suffering from the survivals of feudalism and from land hunger. The Communist Party of Poland led the struggle for winning the peasant masses under the slogan "all land to the peasants" at the same time advancing a number of partial demands, such as "not a penny in taxes for the fascist government," "against the fascist compulsory clearing of pastures," "against the abolition of the usufruct" (land fee), "against road building corvées" (*Scharwarka*) and "against quit rents." These demands were very popular among the masses, but essentially they can hardly be considered partial demands. Their main purpose was to bring the peasants into direct collision with the state power. If the revolutionary crises commenced, if the proletariat rose to the fight, the peasant movement under these slogans could be of great assistance to the proletariat. When, however, a decline of the peasant movement was to be observed, after the peasant revolt in Central Galicia, and the proletariat failed to give the necessary support to the fight, it should have been the task of the Party to lay chief stress on such partial demands as could have brought the largest number of peasants into the struggle.

The Communists frequently did not display sufficient

flexibility in their tactics, in order, in spite of the threat of punitive expeditions, to secure partial successes for the peasants, such as a partial reduction in the rates of forced labour and a reduction of the road building corvées, etc., and thus to retain their influence among the peasantry and preserve their organizations for the future fight.

In countries where the peasantry during the crisis, in consequence of the misery that had afflicted them, began to turn their backs on the bourgeoisie, the Communists missed the opportunity of furnishing the rising peasant movement with fighting slogans directed against the omnipotence of monopoly capital, which was ruining the peasantry, against low prices and the "thralldom of interest."

In *Germany*, where the discontent of the peasant masses had assumed vast proportions, as a result of robbery prices, taxes and usurious interest, the Communist Party in the autumn of 1931 published its programme of aid to the peasants, in which it advocated the cancellation of debts, the abolition of indirect taxation and the expropriation of the large estates and demanded government aid for the toiling peasants. On the strength of this programme, a group of North German peasant leaders, who had been formerly connected with the fascist movement, in 1931 turned to the Communist Party. But the Communist Party, by reason of its lack of cadres of rural organizers and propagandists, was unable properly to explain this programme in the rural districts and thus counteract the growing influence of the fascists, who made wide play with their "anti-trust and anti-bank" demagogy. The peasants turned to a party which they did not yet know by its deeds and which was not yet in power, but which promised the peasants to raise agricultural prices and to improve their conditions without overthrowing capitalism.

In *France* and in the *United States*, the discontent of the peasants and farmers resulted in a wide movement against the low price of farm produce. The Communist Party took up the demands of the farmers only after great delay, having waited until the farmers' movement was on the ebb; it came out against the profits of the middlemen and the millers, thus creating conditions for a further increase of its influence among the farmers.

Nor were the Communists able to lead the movement of the *urban middle classes* against the monopoly trusts and banks, and to carry these strata with them. When in Germany the

Danat Bank crashed, with the result that large numbers of the petty bourgeoisie lost their deposits, the Communist Party issued no fighting slogans for these strata and allowed a favourable opportunity for gaining greater influence among these strata to go by unutilized. In most of the other countries the petty bourgeoisie did not receive adequate support from the Communists in their resistance to the trusts and to the banks which were draining their life blood. The consequence was that these strata held aloof from the struggle, ultimately followed the fascists and helped them to achieve their victory.

Although the influence and the weight of the Communist Parties among the toiling masses grew enormously, the Communists were not strong enough to break the influence of the Social-Democratic Party and trade union leaders among the working masses and thus to prevent the masses abstaining from the struggle purely from a sense of discipline. It became apparent that the Communist Parties were not sufficiently trained theoretically and tactically to discover ways of influencing and leading the masses that would have rapidly resulted in healing the split in the ranks of the labour movement and in a rapid gain in the strength and organization of the working class, which are conditions for a victorious struggle of the working class.

The weakness of the working class, caused by its divided condition and the betrayal of the interests of the workers by the Social-Democratic Party, enabled the German bourgeoisie to take advantage of the vacillations of the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry in order to draw these strata temporarily into the camp of fascism. The German Communists did not promptly realize the extraordinary significance of the yoke of the Versailles Treaty, which imposed untold burdens on the toiling masses, and were not skilful enough to utilize in the interests of the class struggle the situation thereby created. They allowed the German bourgeoisie to make the hatred felt for the yoke of Versailles serve for the maintenance of their own rule.

The Fascist Offensive Against the German Toilers

The defeat of the German proletariat and the establishment of the fascist dictatorship in Germany was the greatest event that marked these first years of the crisis in the capitalist countries. The oldest organizations of the working class, formed

under the banner of Marxism, were smashed by a band of bestial robbers. One of the most progressive and culturally developed peoples fell under the sway of the most reactionary and most chauvinistic party of finance capital. A culturally highly developed country became a hotbed of European reaction, a gruesome torture chamber, the instigator of a new war.

The question of whether the toiling masses of Germany could have averted this catastrophe is one fraught with significance. There can be no doubt that they could have done so. But this would have required that the working class should have established the united front and destroyed the counter-revolutionary united front of the Social-Democratic and reformist trade union leaders with the bourgeoisie; it should not have allowed itself to be beguiled by the Social-Democratic theory that the class struggle is impossible in time of crisis, that one must wait passively until it passes and that it is useless to take the offensive against fascism. It would have required that the working class should have assumed the counter-offensive against capital and force it to grant aid to the suffering population. It would have required that the working class should not have allowed the League of Red Front Fighters to be smashed and disarmed, but should have brought about its amalgamation with the Reichsbanner and, with the change in the policy of the Reichsbanner, have created a powerful revolutionary fighting organization of the proletariat. The working class should not have looked on calmly when the fascists under Hitler's leadership armed themselves, but should have forced the government of the Weimar Republic to disarm the fascist bands, confiscate the property of their organizations and throw their leaders into jail. The working class should not have permitted the fascists to develop their demagoguery in connection with the yoke of the Versailles Treaty, but should have forced the Weimar Republic to tear up the Versailles Treaty.

But this the German working class did not do. Its majority followed the Social-Democratic Party blindly, and paid no heed to the warning voice of the Communists. And so it must now endure the horrors of the fascist hell. The Communists of Germany alone were unable to defend the toiling masses from this catastrophe.

As early as 1930, the disintegration of the Weimar system became apparent. A frantic race to mobilize the masses set in, a race between the approaching revolution and the counter-revolution which was arming against it. It became clear that

the German bourgeoisie could no longer rule by methods of parliamentarianism and bourgeois democracy.

In the spring of 1932 it had already become evident that the fascists had a considerable advantage over the Communists in the matter of mobilizing the masses, and that, if the relation of class forces did not rapidly change in favour of the proletariat, the establishment of a most brutal and bloodthirsty dictatorship of the fascists in Germany was inevitable. The Communists endeavoured to bring about this change in the relation of forces in favour of the proletariat by doing all they could to intensify the fight for the united front. They set themselves the task of achieving an agreement with the Social-Democratic Party and the General Federation of German Trade Unions (the A.D.G.B.) at any price. The purpose of the united front would have been to repulse fascism and defend the remnants of the liberties of bourgeois democracy.

But the Social-Democratic Party definitely rejected every such proposal. Even when the fascists had already transferred the struggle to the streets, terrorizing the workers in all the cities of Germany and foully assassinating the most prominent representatives of the proletariat, the Social-Democrats continued to confine themselves exclusively to making lame protests in Parliament. It was clear to everybody with any discernment that the struggle against the fascists could no longer be settled in parliament, but that the settlement of Germany's future and the fate of the German labour movement had been already shifted by the fascists to the streets.

Even when the Papen government chased out the Social-Democratic ministers in Prussia on July 20, and the Communist Party proposed the proclamation of a general strike to the Socialist Party and the General Confederation of Trade Unions (A.D.G.B.), both these bodies called upon the workers to remain calm. The dismissed Ministers appealed to the Reich Supreme Court, on the grounds that the constitution had been violated.

Even on January 30, 1933, when finance capital had already given the Hitler Party governmental power to exercise the fascist dictatorship, the Social-Democratic Party, and the A.D.G.B. again rejected the proposal of the Communist Party to summon a general strike. They proclaimed the Communists provocateurs and called upon the workers not to offer resistance.

The Communists during this period did everything in their power to mobilize the toiling masses for the revolutionary

struggle and to prevent the fascist dictatorship. In this the Communists achieved considerable success. But they were not able to change the relationship of forces obtaining at that time as long as the Social-Democrats did not abandon their hostile attitude to the united front and the struggle.

Now let the workers of Germany, let the world proletariat judge who bears the blame for the German defeat. Let them learn the bloody lesson of the German events: that this defeat was possible only because the majority of the working class still blindly followed the Social-Democratic Party, allowed the warnings of the Communists to pass unheeded and rejected the struggle. There are "Left" also-revolutionaries who come forward and maintain that the Communists should have commenced the struggle, regardless of the fact that such a struggle of the minority of the proletariat would have ended in defeat. These heroes of the pseudo-revolutionary phrase refuse to understand that this would have involved an even greater defeat and the total annihilation of the revolutionary cadres of the German proletariat.

The German proletariat has suffered a defeat. The Communists did not and do not want the revolutionary cadres to perish out of pure heroism. That is not the finest kind of heroism. They want them to organize new struggles and new victories. (*Applause.*)

The Bourgeoisie Has Failed to Weaken the Fighting Spirit of the Masses

The defeat of the proletariat in Germany, one of the most important strategic points of the international class struggle, resulted for a short time in retarding the growth of the revolutionary mass movement and in temporarily halting the maturing of the elements of a revolutionary crisis in Poland as well. The defeat in Germany emboldened international reaction, increased the menace of war, intensified the pressure exercised by the bourgeoisie on the working class and multiplied the efforts to establish a fascist regime in other countries too.

At the same time that the fascists were attacking the toilers of Germany, the proletariat succeeded in achieving a number of major victories in other countries. The Chinese proletarians and peasants established their *Chinese Soviet Republic*. In the military campaigns undertaken by the Nanking government against the Red Army, the masses of the people displayed

inspiring examples of heroism and devotion to the revolution. In view of the attack of the Japanese imperialists and of the refusal of the Nanking government to resist this attack, the Chinese Soviets raised the standard on behalf of saving the Chinese people from the Japanese yoke, on behalf of the revolutionary fight of the people against Japanese imperialism, thus rendering the advance of the latter into the interior of China more difficult. Within a short space of time the Chinese Soviets have become a power which even the international policies of the imperialists could not ignore.

In *Spain*, in spite of the split in the working-class movement, we observe a mighty rise of the mass movement, a broad wave of mass strikes, an increasing number of political strikes and the spread of the movement of the peasants, who take possession of the landed estates.

In all capitalist and colonial countries, we observe a steadily-rising wave of strikes and peasant movements. But of decisive importance for the whole world revolutionary front was the circumstance that precisely during the years in which the toiling masses of the whole world were plunged into unspeakable misery by capitalism, when fascism in Germany had smashed the labour organizations to bits, the Soviet Union completed the First Five-Year Plan, while the welfare of its toilers improved from day to day. It was precisely during these years that socialism in the Soviet Union succeeded finally and irrevocably.

This historical victory of socialism in the Soviet Union is undermining the system of world imperialism, multiplying the forces of revolution, enhancing the importance of the Soviet Union as a factor for peace and as the basis of the world revolution, and strengthening the will of the toilers of the whole world to fight for socialism and for Soviet Government.

Towards the end of this period of the struggle the bourgeoisie succeeded in improving its position at the expense of the workers, peasants and the colonial peoples, in creating conditions for a transition from crisis to depression, and in inflicting a defeat on the German proletariat. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie did not succeed in weakening the front of world revolution; it did not succeed in smashing the Communist Party of Germany; it did not succeed in creating the conditions for a new economic boom.

The international relation of forces has changed not in favour

of capitalism but in favour of socialism, not in favour of the bourgeoisie, but in favour of the proletariat.

I now come to the third section of the period under review, which covers the swing of the Socialist workers towards a united front with the Communists.

THE SHIFT OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS TOWARDS A UNITED FRONT WITH THE COMMUNISTS

Under the influence of the final and irrevocable victory of socialism in the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and the horrors of fascism in Germany, on the other, the whole system of views, the whole world outlook of the masses of the toilers, who only recently still believed in the unshakeable firmness of capitalism and bourgeois democracy, and in the possibility of a peaceful evolution to socialism, without revolutions and wars, began to collapse. The ideological basis upon which the programme and tactics of the reformist parties had been based, is caving in.

The working class has realized that the split in the ranks of the labour movement led to the victory of fascism in Germany, and that the working class needs unity.

The victory of fascism in Germany has not initiated a long period of reaction, as the Social-Democrats prophesied. On the contrary, "*a tendency towards the rapid maturing of the revolutionary crisis*" is to be observed all over the world, as the Thirteenth Plenum emphasized. Throughout the world "the idea of storming the citadel of capitalism is maturing in the minds of the masses," as Comrade Stalin formulated it at the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.

In this situation the Soviet Union is increasingly winning the minds and hearts of the toilers, and is showing them the path of struggle. In this situation, the victory of socialism is inducing millions to change their views and opinions completely. In this situation a change is taking place in the sentiments of the vast numbers of workers, and especially in the sentiments of the Social-Democratic workers and the workers organized in the reformist trade unions.

The first expression of this change was, firstly, the *united front* of the world proletariat, spontaneously created on a wide scale for the defence of the prisoners of Leipzig, where the courageous defence of Communism by Comrade Dimitrov was

of great historical importance for the achievement of a united front. Secondly, the resort of the workers to active resistance against fascism in their own country. The proletariat no longer yields to fascism without a struggle, as was the case in Germany, but replied to the fascist attack with a *general strike* in France in February 1934, and an *armed struggle* in Austria in February 1934, and in Spain in October 1934.

The armed struggle in Austria and Spain revealed the tremendous fighting power of the working class, the boundless heroism and self-sacrifice, the revolutionary firmness and endurance of the fighting workers. The brave Schutzbündlers, the heroes of Floridsdorf, the defenders of the Karl Marx House and the Goethe House in Vienna, Kolomann Wallisch, Engineer Weissel and Münichreiter will for ever be remembered in the history of the proletarian struggle for emancipation.

The heroic miners of Asturias, the first Spanish Red Guards, the defenders of Oviedo—Communists, Socialists, anarchists, and non-partisans—have covered themselves with immortal glory. We send our greetings to the thousands of Spanish revolutionaries who are pining in the dungeons of Lerroux and Gil Robles, to the leader of the Spanish Socialists, Caballero, now languishing in prison.

On the other hand, those Social-Democratic leaders who fled the field of battle and forgot the elementary duty of battle commanders, have covered themselves with shame and disgrace. The leaders of the Spanish anarchists, who betrayed the struggle from within and acted in conjunction with Lerroux and Gil Robles, have covered themselves with eternal shame and disgrace.

Comrades, let us recall the fresh revolutionary breeze that swept through the working-class quarters of the cities of the whole world at the news of the events in Austria and Spain! How the heroic struggles of the proletarians in defence of Oviedo stirred the toilers of all countries! What enthusiasm the banner of the fight for Soviet Government raised in Asturias inspired in the heart of every worker!

The Bankruptcy of Social-Democratic Policy

But why, unlike the armed insurrection of October 1917 in Russia, did the armed struggle of the proletariat in February 1934 in Austria and in October 1934 in Spain not result in the victory of the proletariat?

In *Spain*, the monarchy was overthrown in April 1931, as it was overthrown in Russia in February 1917. The Spanish bourgeois-democratic revolution began. Unlike the Bolsheviks, who in the Soviets fought for continuing the revolution, the Spanish Socialists joined the Azaña government, thus following the example of the Russian Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who became ministers in the Kerensky government.

What did the Spanish Socialist ministers do? What did the whole Spanish Socialist Party do during the three years of the revolution, that same Socialist Party that summoned the workers to armed struggle in October 1934?

Instead of advocating the disarming of the reactionary fascist Civil Guard, the Spanish Socialists voted for the appropriations for its further extension, and after his release from prison, appointed the monarchist General San Jurjo, who had taken up arms against the republic, commander of this Civil Guard, which was charged with the duty of protecting the republic. Instead of demanding the elimination of reactionary officers and the democratization of the army, they gave the reactionaries in the army an absolutely free hand. Instead of disarming the enemies of the people, the fascists, and arresting them, they persecuted the Communists and passed a law for the defence of the republic, a law under which the participants in the October fighting—Socialists and Communists—are now being sentenced.

They left the land, property and rights of the reactionary church and monasteries intact, and did not give land to the peasants, who should have been won for the revolution. They did not introduce workers' control over production; they did not improve the condition of the workers, nor did they arm them for the defence of the revolution. Instead of forcing the reactionary bourgeoisie into an impasse, they permitted it to organize and arm.

Is that how the Bolsheviks acted in 1917? Is that how they prepared for the victory of the proletariat in the revolution? Did not the Spanish Socialists act like Kerensky, whose government was overthrown by the Bolsheviks?

Even in February 1917, under the pressure of the Bolsheviks, the tsarist gendarmeries was abolished, soldiers' committees introduced, the soldiers granted civil rights and the Tsar and his highest officials arrested. Under the slogans Peace, Bread, Land and Freedom, the Bolsheviks started the insurrection, fought for these demands in every stage of the revolution, mobilizing the masses of the people in support of these demands.

On the very first day of the insurrection they decreed the transfer of the whole land to the peasantry.

Immediately after their victory, they led the fight for the conclusion of a treaty of peace; they granted freedom to the subject peoples; they introduced workers' control in the factories; they proceeded to confiscate the property of counter-revolutionaries and completely eliminated the land-owning class and the bourgeois machinery for suppressing the toilers.

Long before the revolution itself, the activities of the Bolsheviks were directed towards mobilizing the proletariat and its allies for the victorious overthrow of bourgeois rule, for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which put the most burning demands of the people into effect. That is why the majority of the toilers supported the Bolsheviks and helped them to victory.

The activities of the Spanish Socialists inside and outside the Azaña government entirely aimed at reaching an understanding with the bourgeoisie, at preserving private property, at protecting the interests of the landowners, the church and the bourgeoisie against the revolutionary onslaught of the masses, and at leaving the old bourgeois state machinery intact. By so doing, they weakened the proletariat and strengthened the fascists.

In *Austria*, there was no revolutionary situation, as there was in Spain, until the beginning of the armed struggle. But the Austrian proletariat had the advantage that the overwhelming majority of the workers were organized in one party and in trade unions following the leadership of this party, and that the numerical weight of the proletariat was extremely great in this little country.

But the Social-Democratic Party, which had the following of ninety per cent. of the Austrian proletariat, was not a revolutionary party that had methodically and systematically made preparations for the struggle for the victory of the proletariat. As early as the revolution of 1918–20 this party had aided the bourgeoisie to gain the upper hand resting content with the fact that the working class retained formal democratic rights and a few social gains.

When the fascists began their struggle against bourgeois democracy, the Social-Democratic leaders yielded ground step by step, surrendering one achievement of the revolution of 1918 after another. They agreed to the extension of the president's prerogatives and to the impairing of the constitution. They

permitted the suppression of their press and the partial disarming of the Schutzbund. For years they persuaded the masses to remain faithful to bourgeois democracy; they did not contemplate a proletarian revolution, nor did they prepare the masses for it.

The fighting strength of the bourgeoisie grew, while the fighting strength of the proletariat diminished. The belief of the toiling masses in the possibility of an improvement of their conditions under Social-Democratic leadership began to vanish.

It is a ridiculous attempt on the part of Otto Bauer now, after the Austrian Social-Democratic Party has by its conduct disorganized the toilers and failed to prepare for the struggle, to try to prove that he followed the example of the Bolsheviks, only adapting the tactics of the "Asiatic" Bolsheviks to "European" conditions.

Armed insurrection must be prepared in such a way as to be the affair of the entire working class. The majority of the proletariat must be won over to it; furthermore, the support of the majority of the toilers is indispensable. The Spanish and Austrian Socialists, however, reduced insurrection to an affair of the fighting formations.

If the armed insurrection is to be successful, the most favourable moment for the proletariat must be chosen. The Spanish and Austrian Socialists, however, let the initiative slip from their hands long before, allowing the fascists to appoint the day of battle.

For armed insurrection to be successful, the masses must clearly know the fighting aims pursued by the insurrectionaries. The Spanish and the Austrian Social-Democratic leaders, however, did not formulate such fighting aims. They did not resort to arms in order to overthrow the bourgeoisie, but merely intended to bring pressure to bear on the bourgeoisie and to defend themselves against its onslaught.

In 1917 the Russian proletariat created the *Soviets*, organs capable of embracing all workers, peasants, employees, soldiers and sailors without exception.

Within the Soviets the Bolsheviks fought for the leadership of the masses. The Bolsheviks transformed the Soviets into organs for preparing and carrying out the proletarian insurrection.

In Spain, on the contrary, Largo Caballero declared that Soviets were not needed in Spain, because the whole working

class was organized in trade unions and in parties. Is that true? No, it is not. In Spain, as in every capitalist country, the majority of the workers are not organized.

By opposing the establishment of Soviets, Largo Caballero and the Spanish Socialists wanted to turn insurrection, which can only be an affair of the whole working class, into an affair of the Socialist Party, or of a *bloc* of parties, in order to restrict the movement and to prevent it assuming a mass character.

In Austria, Bauer and Deutsch did not think of creating mass organs for preparing and leading the struggle, but in true Blanquist fashion, left the armed struggle entirely to the fighting Schutzbund, who were fighting in isolation. All they had to do was to summon the masses to action in order within a few days to establish organs that would have been able to mobilize the masses of toilers for the struggle and in order to organize support for the fighting Schutzbündlers. In that way the course of the subsequent fighting would have changed entirely in favour of the proletariat.

But the Austrian and Spanish Socialists saw fit, even at the moment of armed struggle, to ignore the experience of the Russian Revolution. Thousands of proletarians have paid with their lives and unspeakable torture for the fact that the Russian experience was ignored.

We acknowledge the great fact that both in Spain and Austria, some of the Social-Democratic leaders, even if under the pressure of the masses, decided in favour of the armed struggle against the bourgeoisie. In this the Communists self-sacrificingly supported them.

In Spain, the Communists joined the Workers' Alliance, although they enjoyed no serious influence in it. In Spain, as in Austria, the Communists fought in the front ranks, for the place of Communists is always where the fighting is in progress. But it is precisely the experience of these armed struggles under Social-Democratic leadership that shows that under such leadership the proletariat cannot succeed.

The successes gained in the armed struggle in Asturias, where a Red Guard was organized, and where under the leadership of the Communists the armed struggle assumed the dimensions of a regular insurrection, confirm what the Russian Revolution had already proved, namely, that a *Communist, Bolshevik leadership* is essential if the armed struggle of the proletariat is to be successful. But neither in Spain nor in Austria was there such leadership owing to the weakness of the

young Communist Parties. And so the revolutionary elements among the Schutzbund and the Spanish Socialists drew the correct conclusion when they joined the ranks of the Communist Party, thus indicating that they do not consider the struggle at an end.

Successes of the United Front and the Anti-Fascist People's Front

The struggle in France, which assumed big dimensions in February 1934, in its external aspect remained on a lower level than the struggles in Spain and Austria; but owing to the fact that the fight of the French proletariat was directed against fascism in good time, it exerted a *greater influence* on the development of the proletarian struggle in all countries.

What is the distinctive feature of the struggle in France?

When the fascist bands for the first time marched *en masse* through the streets of Paris, the French proletariat did not let itself be lulled by the theory of the lesser evil and by talk of formal democracy, as was the case in Germany, but at the first fascist sally, flocked into the streets to oppose fascism without distinction of party in the tremendous political demonstration of February 9 and the political general strike of February 12, 1934. In this way the French proletariat *repulsed the first big attack of the fascists in France.* (*Applause.*) The French proletariat, by establishing a fighting united front in the February days strikingly proved what a tremendous force the proletariat is when it is united and does not evade the struggle, but takes a prompt stand against its enemy.

By this action the proletariat compelled the French Socialist Party, although after great vacillations, to consent to the establishment of a united front with the Communist Party. In this way, it laid the foundation for united anti-fascist actions of the whole organized labour movement, which are exerting a tremendous influence on the unorganized majority of the working class and the petty bourgeois masses in town and country.

Our Communist Party of France, considerably grown and full of big initiative, has, however, not remained content with the establishment of a united front with the Socialists, but has drawn up a programme of demands that cut the bourgeoisie to the quick, such as the demand for the merciless taxation of wealth; or demands that disorganize the fascists, such as the demand for the prohibition of the fascist organizations and their

press, the arrest of the fascist leaders and the confiscation of the funds of the fascist organizations; or demands that aim at lessening the danger of war, such as the demand for a peace treaty with the Soviet Union, and for a real fight against the warmongers. These are all demands designed to ameliorate the condition of the toiling masses and consolidate their positions.

By its actions, the Communist Party of France has laid the foundation for a wide people's front in the fight against fascism and war, which is attracting increasing numbers of the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the intellectuals drawing followers of the Radical Socialist Party into the movement and making the revolutionary proletariat more and more the hegemon, the leader in the struggle of all the toilers.

The tremendous anti-fascist demonstration on July 14, 1935, the French national holiday, in which the Communists, Socialists and Radical Socialists marched together, and in which more than half a million toilers took part in Paris alone, was not only the greatest of all demonstrations that have hitherto taken place in capitalist countries, but also an expression of the tremendous influence exerted by the united front on the fighting spirit of the workers, and through them attracting the rest of the toiling sections of the population to the people's front. (*Prolonged applause.*)

This was also borne out by the important successes gained by the Communist Party of France in the recent municipal elections held this year. These successes were the result of the struggle of the Communist Party for establishing a united front of the working class and the anti-fascist people's front for the defence of democratic rights. It was the result of the activity and initiative displayed by the Communists in connection with the cabinet crises and the fight on behalf of the pact of mutual assistance between France and the Soviet Union in the event of military attack.

This success of the French Communist Party strengthens the French proletariat and renders it more difficult for the bourgeoisie to resort to fascist methods of rule.

The situation in France has grown very acute. The fate of the Third Republic and of democracy, the fate of the toiling masses, now depends on the further development of the united front and the people's front, on the activity of the masses.

The struggle of the French proletariat is one of great international importance. The success of the French proletariat, which repulsed the first mass attack of the fascists in February

1934 thanks to the united front of the Communists and Socialists, and which effected its great march on fascism on July 14, 1935, has shown the toilers of all countries that only a united fight of the toilers based on revolutionary tactics can repel the offensive of capital and fascism and foil the war-mongers.

The fight of the French proletariat has shown the toilers how the proletariat must act in capitalist countries in order to repulse the attacks of fascism and to fit itself for the conquest of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for Socialism. The united front agreement between the Socialists and the Communists in France, which the Socialists accepted only under the pressure of the masses and against the will of the Executive Committee of the Second International, has pointed the way to be followed by the Left Social-Democrats of all countries.

United front agreements have been reached between the Communists and Socialists in Austria, Spain and Italy, while united front mass action of the workers is taking place in *England, the United States, Poland, Czechoslovakia* and many other countries, where the Socialist Party leaders, like the Executive Committee of the Second International, continue to reject all agreement with the Communists.

In *Great Britain*, the small Communist Party has established a united front with the Independent Labour Party, with numerous trade unions and lower organizations of the Labour Party. On September 9, 1934, it was able to bring 150,000 workers out into the streets, and in January and February 1935, by means of a wave of demonstrations, meetings, and strikes, it was able to force the government to abandon the second part of the Unemployment Act, an act that provided for the organization of labour camps and the transfer of unemployed relief affairs to an extra-parliamentary commission. The establishment of the united front with local trade union organizations, and the persistent work carried on by the Communists within them, has already resulted in the trade unions in Great Britain taking a stand in a number of cases against the General Trade Union Council and rejecting the Black Circular which calls for the expulsion of Communists from the trade unions.

In the *United States of America*, the revolutionary workers were able, as a result of united front tactics, to consolidate and extend their influence in a number of A.F.L. organizations. They were able in a large measure to win the support of the trade unions for the bill for unemployment insurance intro-

duced by the Communists and thus to make this demand the affair of all the toilers. The revolutionary workers were in this way able to gain decisive influence in the big strikes of 1934, the seamen's strike on the Pacific Coast and the general strike in San Francisco, whereby a number of material advantages were gained for the workers and the general political position and the class-consciousness of the American proletariat strengthened. As a result, the character of the American labour movement has undergone a decisive change and the working class has been led to adopt an independent policy.

In *Poland*, although the leaders of the Social-Democratic Party (P.P.S.) rejected every proposal for an agreement with the Communists, the change in the temper of the masses has led to the Communists establishing a united front with various organizations of Socialists and to strengthening the anti-fascist movement among the toiling masses. This was most clearly reflected in the mighty wave of political strikes and peasant actions undertaken on the initiative of the Communist Party against the new fascist constitution. This wave involved all the industrial centres and several peasant districts and was supported by both parties. This political strike movement, the leadership of which the P.P.S. wants to claim solely for itself, while it is at the same time endeavouring to split the movement into individual strikes, will undoubtedly lead to the further revolutionizing of the masses who are following the P.P.S., and to a further extension of the united front, in the form of agreements between Communists and Socialists for the fight against fascism and for the defence of the legal status of the trade unions and the labour organizations.

The united front movement of the toilers is making headway in all capitalist countries, no matter what the attitude of the Social-Democratic leaders may be towards the practice of agreements with the Communists, and no matter how these leaders may fear the revolutionizing effect of a united front with the Communists upon the masses they lead. It would take up very much time were I in my report to enumerate all the successes of this united front movement.

This movement manifests itself in the most varied forms, from the agreements between the parties and the non-party *Amsterdam-Pleyel movement* against fascism and war, at the head of which stands our friend Henri Barbusse, to the amalgamation of trade union, youth, sport, cultural and other organizations. The reformist leaders, try as they may, are no

longer able to check the tremendous influence exercised by the slogan on behalf of the fighting unity of all proletarians against fascism and war. Still less are they succeeding in checking the growing influence exerted on the toiling masses of the whole world by the victory of Socialism in the Soviet Union.

Let the Social-Democrats hold posts in the governments of Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden and Norway, let the Labour Party leaders take over the government in England—the Communists will support them against the fascists—the working masses in these countries have begun to understand that their strength does not lie in cabinet posts but in the united front fight.

But the Social-Democratic ministers in Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Sweden and Norway are not conducting a real fight against fascism.

The Czech people are alarmed as to the fate of their national independence. This alarm is shared by the Communists. But what do the Social-Democratic ministers do? Instead of cutting the ground from under the Hitler agents in Czechoslovakia by a policy designed in the national and economic interests of the toiling masses, they nurse Henlein's fascist movement and enable him to draw the majority of the Germans in Czechoslovakia into his party. Instead of mobilizing all the forces of the people against fascism, they persecute the Communists. Instead of throwing the fascists into jail and concentration camps, they do that to the Communists and anti-fascists. Instead of carrying on a struggle against the warmongers, the Danish and Swedish Social-Democratic governments are by their policy objectively supporting the German fascists. This anti-labour policy of the Social-Democratic Parties in Czechoslovakia and the Scandinavian countries is making the working masses realize that the Social-Democratic ministers are not a bulwark against fascism, war preparations and the capitalist offensive.

The realization of this is inducing the working class to strive for a united front with the Communists—as is particularly shown in the case of Czechoslovakia—in order to settle accounts with fascism and the warmongers in a proletarian fashion, to avoid a situation such as the German proletariat now has to suffer, and to prevent the occurrence of a new world shambles.

The working class in the fascist countries have most of all realized the great strength and value of the united front. In spite of a number of sectarian notions that recently prevailed

among the leaders of the Communist Party of Germany, and in spite of the resistance of the Social-Democratic leaders, the masses of German workers are more and more clearly realizing that an effective struggle against fascism can be carried on, and the latter's overthrow achieved, only by means of a united front of the Communists and Social-Democrats.

In Hungary, the workers realize that they can defend their trade unions, and even the Social-Democratic organizations, only by a united front with those very Communists who only very recently were betrayed to the police by the Social-Democratic leaders.

The Way to Overcome the Split in the Ranks of the Working Class

The movement for a united front of Communists and Socialists has profound roots. It arises from the deep impression made on the wide masses of workers by the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union, under the influence of which the idea of storming the citadel of capitalism is maturing in the minds of the masses. It arises from the experience of the whole international labour movement in the capitalist countries, from the experience of the German defeat, from the experience of the armed struggles in Austria and Spain and from the experience of the general strike and the united front in France. From this the working class is drawing the conclusion that the struggle against capitalism can be carried on only by a united front and in closest contact with the Soviet Union.

This conclusion of the masses, drawn from their own experience in the struggle, has produced the greatest change in the international labour movement since the October Revolution.

Comrades, the movement for the united front is much more than the arithmetical sum of the forces of two workers' parties. The majority of the working class in the capitalist countries is unorganized and in many countries still follows the bourgeois parties. The united front of the labour movement represents such an increase of strength as to make it a powerful force of attraction for the mass of proletarians who are still not class-conscious, detaching them from the bourgeois parties and enrolling them in the class struggle.

In Poland, where the Polish Socialist Party is still legal, while the Communists are subjected to the most brutal persecution, where the Socialist and non-party workers when they undertake joint action with the Communists expose themselves to the

same persecution, the united front bears witness to the tremendous revolutionizing of the working-class masses and their readiness to make sacrifices for the revolutionary struggle.

If the three million members of the British Labour Party tend towards a united front with the Communist Party, this implies that we have here something much more than the arithmetical sum of the forces of the two parties; it implies rather that the masses are turning from reformism to a revolutionary policy.

The united front is the first step towards overcoming the split in the working-class movement, towards the creation of a strong unified revolutionary party of the proletariat.

In *Austria*, the Communists have raised the question of amalgamation with the party of Revolutionary Socialists. This union has not yet materialized, because the Socialists did not want it.

In *France*, the Communists entered into negotiations with the Socialist Party for a united revolutionary party.

We can only welcome the voices raised by some Socialists in the *Baltic countries*, who consider closer political relations with the Soviet labour movement necessary.

This movement for a united revolutionary party will undoubtedly continue to develop, since the victory of Socialism in the Soviet Union has shaken the foundations of reformism, and all the toilers of the world will rally around the policy of the Soviet Union.

This is confirmed not only by developments in the imperialist countries, but also by developments in the colonies and dependent countries.

The Triumphant Progress of the Chinese Soviets

The outstanding event of the whole post-war period, an event that has impressed its stamp on the colonial world, is the Chinese Revolution which since the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International has taken on a Soviet form. The rise and victorious development of the Soviet movement in China is of the most far-reaching world historical importance. The heroic struggle of the Chinese Red Army, which has covered itself with undying fame, stands as a shining example for the toilers of the whole colonial world. Six times have the militarists of the Kuomintang, with the full support of the international imperialists, equipped expeditions to crush the

Soviet movement. In spite of the tremendous means and forces mobilized for this purpose by the enemies of the Chinese people, the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army of China has been able to parry all the blows of the imperialists and the Chinese counter-revolutionary exploiting classes. (*Applause.*) All the six campaigns of the generals against the Soviet districts ended with the defeat of the Kuomintang militarists. (*Applause.*)

Although after the sixth campaign the Chinese Red Army, in order to avoid encirclement by the Kuomintang troops, was obliged to evacuate the territory of the former Central Soviet area in Kiangsi, the Red Army succeeded in foiling the plan of the imperialists and Chinese militarists, which aimed at surrounding and annihilating the Chinese Red Army. In the course of bitter fighting the Red Army considerably increased its fighting strength. The march to the Province of Szechuan so brilliantly executed by the main forces of the Chinese Red Army, shows what prospects are open to the further development of Soviet China. The lessons of the military struggles of the Chinese Red Army furnish striking proof of the fact that a people oppressed by imperialism can successfully take up the struggle in a revolutionary war, which in its course satisfies the fundamental needs of the toilers, against a superior enemy and international imperialism armed to the teeth. The successes gained by the Chinese Soviets furnish brilliant confirmation of the correctness of the line of the Communist International, which is based on Lenin's and Stalin's doctrine of the colonial revolution. The successes gained by the Chinese Soviets are an expression of the overwhelming influence of the Socialist October Revolution, which has ushered in a new era in the history of human society.

In China, for the first time in world history, a national revolutionary struggle for emancipation is passing into an unrestricted revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. For the first time in world history, an anti-imperialist agrarian revolution in a semi-colonial country is taking the form of a fight for Soviets. Thus the possibility of establishing a Soviet power in a colonial country is proved in practice, a Soviet Power which here makes its appearance in the state form of a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, and which ensures the passing of the bourgeois democratic revolution into the socialist revolution.

The Chinese revolution provides the first model of a colonial

revolution in which the ideological and also, in its initial form, the state hegemony of the proletariat is realized. In the Chinese working class the colonial proletariat has proved in practice its ability to settle great historical problems, to maintain the complete economic and political independence of the country, to completely abolish feudal survivals, to put an end to large landed proprietorship, to excise the cancer of usury, and to undertake revolutionary changes that clear the way for the victory of socialism.

The policy of the Chinese Soviets, the practical measures they have taken, which ensure a definitely tangible improvement in the conditions of the workers and peasants, are helping to awaken the masses of toilers to active political life and rapidly to raise the level of their organization and political consciousness. Among the toilers of the Kuomintang areas of China, who live under conditions which deprive them of all rights and reduce them to ruin, starvation and extermination, while the Kuomintang regime condemns them to continued colonial slavery, the conviction is growing that only the Soviets can save China. Wider and wider masses of the toilers of China are coming to realize that the Soviets are the only force capable of defending the unity and independence of China, uniting the country, repelling the attacks of the imperialist conquerors and ensuring a radical improvement in the condition of the toiling masses.

The successful development of the Soviet movement in China is arousing enthusiasm for revolutionary struggle among the toilers of the whole colonial world, for whom the Chinese Soviets have become a model and a banner of the revolutionary struggle for freedom.

Comrades, this brings me to the conclusion of the analysis of the three periods of the struggle. Let us summarize the results of the development of the international labour movement since the Sixth World Congress.

The insufferable economic yoke, the absence of all prospect of improvement in the condition of the masses within the framework of capitalism, the direct danger of war, the blind fury of the offensive of the bourgeoisie against the last remnants of democratic liberties and parliamentarism, and the attempts to establish the fascist regime of blood and terror in more and more countries, are causing the wave of the struggle of the proletariat in the capitalist world to rise higher every month.

The Soviet Union is increasingly becoming a centre of attraction for the toiling masses, which means that the idea of the necessity of establishing their own Soviet Power is maturing in the minds of the masses.

No passing changes in the economic situation, no manoeuvres of "Left" and Social-Democratic governments can alter this major trend in the development of the international labour movement.

This upsurge in the labour movement and the increasing desire of the masses to fight for Socialism, show that the revolutionary crisis is maturing all over the world. I now come to the part of my report dealing with the state of affairs in our Sections.

IV. THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL AND ITS SECTIONS

To-day, more than ever before, the development of historical events depends on the degree of consciousness and the state of organization of the working class, on the skilful and clever tactics of the Communists, on the might and strength of the Communist International.

In his report to the Seventeenth Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union held in January-February 1934, Comrade Stalin said:

"Some comrades think that as soon as a revolutionary crisis occurs the bourgeoisie must drop into a hopeless position, that its end is pre-determined, that the victory of the revolution is assured, and that all they have to do is to wait for the bourgeoisie to fall and to draw up victorious resolutions. This is a profound mistake. The victory of revolution never comes by itself. It has to be prepared for and won. And only a strong proletarian revolutionary party can prepare for and win victory. Moments occur when the situation is revolutionary, when the rule of the bourgeoisie is shaken to its very foundations, and yet the victory of the revolution does not come, because there is no revolutionary party of the proletariat sufficiently strong and authoritative to lead the masses and take power. It would be unwise to believe that such 'cases' cannot occur."

Comrades, we must confess that such "cases" frequently occur, that such "cases" may be repeated if we do not take

Comrade Stalin's warning to heart and do not do everything necessary to strengthen the Communist Parties and to see to it that they are able to win over the majority of the proletariat.

Just remember: was not the situation in Germany a revolutionary one in the years 1918-20 and in 1923? Yet the proletariat was not victorious, the reason being that in Germany at this period there was no strong, revolutionary party of the proletariat capable of organizing the victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie. Even in 1932 the Communist Party of Germany proved that it was not strong enough to lead the Socialist workers into a general strike against fascism in spite of the Social-Democratic leaders.

And was not the situation a revolutionary one in Italy in 1920? Yet the proletariat at that time was not victorious; and the fascists came to power because there was still no strong revolutionary party of the proletariat.

Further, might not the issue of events in Austria in February 1934 have been a different one if at that time there had been a strong Communist Party in Austria, if it had not been the Social-Democratic Party, which Otto Bauer himself said was not a revolutionary party, that dominated in Austria?

In Spain, where for four years the bourgeois-democratic revolution has been at a standstill, might there not have been a different situation for the further development of the revolutionary movement?

And could not the success of the unemployed movement and the political activities of the working class in a number of capitalist countries during the past few years have been greater if the Communist Parties had been stronger, if they had been able to create a powerful system of proletarian mass organizations, win the proletariat and the broad toiling masses and lead them in an attack on capitalism?

If the Russian proletariat was victorious in October 1917 it was primarily because of the fact that there was a strong and experienced party of the Bolsheviks in Russia, which, under the firm leadership of Lenin, was able to establish close contact with the whole mass of the exploited and oppressed and to win over the majority of the proletariat in order to lead the whole proletariat to a successful and victorious revolution.

Without such a party the proletariat of Russia could not have conquered power, in spite of the revolutionary situation.

The chief lesson, therefore, to be learned from the history of revolutionary movement is that we Communists must work

unceasingly in organizing the masses, strengthening the Communist Parties and their ties with the masses and strengthening the Communist International.

If we do not prepare ourselves for the accomplishment of this task it may come about—however profound the revolutionary crisis may be—that the bourgeoisie may succeed in fooling the masses, in again suppressing the liberation movement of the proletariat for a certain period, in establishing fascist dictatorship in a number of other countries and in seeking for a way out of its difficult position in a new imperialist war for the repartition of the whole world.

The period that elapsed between the Sixth and the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, was, as I have already said, a period in which the working-class masses swung over to the revolutionary struggle, a period in which the influence of the Communist Parties among the masses rapidly grew, and at the same time a period in which the Communist Parties became organizationally and politically consolidated.

The political and organizational consolidation of the Communist Parties was effected in the course of a struggle against the Right elements which were urging the Parties to capitulate to Social-Democracy. Soon after the Sixth World Congress the Rights began to oppose the line of the Congress: in Germany, *Brandler*, somewhat later in the U.S.A., *Lovestone*; in Czechoslovakia, *Jilek*, in Sweden *Kilbom* and in France *Sellier* and later *Doriot*.

Nevertheless, neither in Germany nor the U.S.A., neither in Czechoslovakia nor France did the Right opportunists succeed in gaining the following of any appreciable sections of the Party membership. Only in Sweden did the Kilbom group, succeed, thanks to the inadequate explanatory work carried on by the followers of the Comintern and to their mistakes, in splitting the Swedish Communist Party and in winning a section of the revolutionary workers away from the Communist International.

In the fight against the Rights, and simultaneously in the fight against the "Left" sectarian views which tended to isolate the Party from the masses, the Communist Parties became sufficiently steeled to counteract opportunist influences; they tested their ranks, ejected the rotten elements who were unfit for the fight, and at the same time acquired the ability of better manœuvring in the fight against the bourgeoisie and reformism, adapting their tactics to the concrete conditions of the class war of the proletariat in each particular country.

By the internal consolidation of the Party, resulting from the experience accumulated in the new stage of struggle and from the serious work performed in training cadres, the Communist Parties rose to a new and higher level. This is borne out by the heroic struggle of the Chinese Red Army, which is headed by peasants, agricultural workers and students who during these seven years have been trained by the Party and have developed into capable organizers and leaders of the masses, into proletarian statesmen.

This is borne out by the work of the Communist Party of Germany, the work of the lower ranks of Party cadres, who, in spite of the frequent disorganization of the central leadership by the Gestapo (the secret police) and the frightful medieval terror, have been able to orient themselves independently in complex political questions, to publish thousands of illegal newspapers and to organize the struggle of the workers against the National Socialists. This is borne out by the skilful tactics of the Communist Party of France, which have led to the establishment of a united front and to the amalgamation of the masses of the people in the fight against the fascist offensive. This is borne out by the October fighting in Spain, where only five years ago there was still but an insignificant group of Communist propagandists led by semi-Trotskyist elements, who later even broke away from the Communist International, but where in the past few years a strong Communist Party was created which led the armed fighting in a large part of Asturias.

The past seven years have shown the world that wherever the toiling masses took up the fight against the imperialist yoke, against the plundering of the toilers by high finance, the banks and the trusts, the fight in the interests of the freedom of the peoples and the culture of humanity, the Communists have fought in the front ranks.

During the past seven years the world was able to convince itself of the steadfastness and self-sacrifice, the boundless devotion of the cadres of the Communist International to the cause of the struggle for emancipation of all who are exploited and oppressed.

Remember the stand made by *Comrade Dimitrov* at the Leipzig trial, remember the trials of *Rakosi* in Hungary, *Antikainen* in Finland and *Fiete Schulze* in Germany, remember the heroic deaths of *Comrade Tsu Tsu-po*, *Luetgens*, and *Kofard-*

hiev, and remember, finally, the numerous heroes and victims of the great struggle for emancipation in all the countries of the world.

Extremely significant is the circumstance that in the period under review individual parties, or several parties in conjunction, frequently took the initiative of international action in the struggle on behalf of the unemployed and against fascism and war. Extremely significant also is the fact that the stronger and more experienced parties assisted the weaker parties with advice, and drew up programmes and documents for them, and the fact that the Communists of imperialist countries constantly helped the Communist Parties of the colonial countries in their work and assisted the weaker parties both in the matter of their internal consolidation and in their fight against the bourgeoisie.

In connection with the fact that during the past few years a change has taken place in the consciousness of the broad working-class masses, particularly of the Social-Democratic workers, the Communist Parties now possess incomparably greater opportunities of winning over the working-class masses. Our slogans are gaining popularity among increasingly broader strata of the working class and also within the Social-Democratic Parties.

The position of the Social-Democratic leaders among the masses must indeed be bad if many of them are now beginning to recognize the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Soviet form of state, the confiscation of the means of production and their nationalization, and the violent overthrow of the power of the exploiting class. This victory of the slogans and ideas of the Communist International goes to show that while in the years of stabilization the Communist Parties extended their influence only very slowly and were not able to destroy the influence of the old and more influential reformist parties, now all the conditions exist which render possible the rapid growth of the influence of the Communist Parties and their success in winning over the majority of the working class to the Communist Parties.

The bourgeoisie is endeavouring to make it difficult for the Communist Parties to win over a majority of the working class by restricting freedom of Communist propaganda, hindering the legal activities of the Communist Parties, employing terror against the Communists and by setting up the slogans of various bourgeois, semi-fascist and fascist parties against the slogans of the Communists.

Faced by the rapid abandonment of reformism by the masses, faced by the danger of proletarian revolution, the bourgeoisie are abolishing the last remnants of bourgeois-democratic liberties and the organizations of the proletariat, including the Social-Democratic Parties and the trade unions.

As a result of this offensive of the bourgeoisie against the working-class organizations, only twenty-two of the sixty-seven sections of the Communist International in the capitalist countries, and only eleven in Europe, are able to work legally or semi-legally. Forty-five sections, fifteen of them in Europe, are obliged to work under conditions of strict illegality and under a gruesome terror. Among them are countries like Italy, Germany, Austria and Latvia, where the fascists have smashed all the organizations of the proletariat, including the Social-Democratic Parties and the trade unions, and are forcibly driving the workers into the fascist organizations.

We Must Explain the Programme, Strategy and Tactics of the Comintern to the Masses

The forms and methods of the struggle of the Communists for the working-class masses, their agitation, propaganda and organizational work are determined by the position of the Communist Party in each given country. Nevertheless, in all capitalist countries without exception, this struggle is being carried on under common slogans advocating a fight against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and against the preparations for a new imperialist war. In all countries the work of the Communists is being conducted under the main slogan of the Communist International, the slogan of fighting for Soviet Power.

Our agitation and propaganda were determined by the circumstance that in their fight against capitalism, fascism and war, the Communists were also obliged at the same time to fight the Social-Democratic Parties, which were holding back the masses from the struggle. Without having fought the Social-Democratic Parties, it would have been impossible to fight the bourgeoisie, because it was a question of winning the Social-Democratic workers for the struggle.

The present situation, if nothing else, compels us to intensify our criticism of those Social-Democratic Parties and leaders who are continuing to hold back the masses from the struggle and who are playing the part of strike-breakers in the struggle

of the working class. But at the same time we must direct our agitation and propaganda very vigorously against the bourgeoisie, especially their reactionary fascist parties, which are endeavouring with the help of their demagogic, anti-capitalist slogans to capture the masses who were not formerly class-conscious and were politically passive and who are turning away from reformism and for the first time are being stirred into action.

The methods of agitation and propaganda adopted by the fascists and many other bourgeois parties and their leaders go to show that the bourgeoisie is feeling its weakness and that it is no longer able to maintain its rule by openly coming out for capitalism before the masses.

Many of our agitators and editors believe that it is our duty to give a theoretical proof that the slogans of the bourgeoisie are unscientific and not in harmony with Marxist-Leninist political economy. That is quite useless. It is our duty to prove in every possible way that the bourgeois leaders are deceiving the masses with these slogans, that no bourgeois party can put these slogans into effect, and that only Soviet government can liberate the toilers from the domination of the banks and the trusts, from the yoke of capital and from poverty, starvation and misery.

It is our duty to prove to the masses that German "National-Socialism" does not contain a single grain of socialism. The fascist demagogues are endeavouring to deck themselves in the toga of people's tribunes who are protecting the "interests" of the whole nation.

It is therefore our duty to expose them as agents of the powerful trusts and the cannon kings, to show the masses what lies behind the legend of national unity and how a handful of capitalists and fascist leaders are battenning on the people. We must show the people that only the dictatorship of the proletariat—which is the only real democracy for the toilers, created in the image of the Soviet Union—is able to help the workers.

The capitalist system is becoming more and more repulsive to the toilers. All the outstanding minds of our generation are turning against the capitalist system. In the eyes of the masses Communism is coming to be their only saviour.

The toiling masses are opposed to capitalism, they have lost their faith in reformism and are beginning to break away from it. The toiling masses are in favour of a united fighting front against capital, fascism and war.

The Communists, who are organizing a consistent fight against the capitalist offensive, fascism and war, are in favour of the united front as a form of unity which can be realized immediately.

But unity of action is not enough. The change that has taken place among the masses in connection with the change in the world situation caused by the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union and the fact that in more and more countries the bourgeoisie are adopting the methods of fascist dictatorship, has resulted in the Social-Democratic masses beginning to turn towards the united front spontaneously. But this does not mean that the masses will come over to Communism just as spontaneously.

The workers are in favour of a united party, but they often picture the creation of such a party in too simplified a form. If all the revolutionary workers are to be united in one party, the masses themselves must widely discuss the programme and tactical questions and the aims of the struggle.

A real united party of the proletariat can be created only on the basis of unity of programme, strategy and tactics. The programme and tactics of the Social-Democratic Parties have suffered bankruptcy. The programme, strategy and tactics of the Communist International have stood every test. We have therefore every reason for explaining our programme, tactics and strategy to the Social-Democratic workers, for fighting on this basis for the union of all revolutionary forces and for assuming the offensive against reformism along the whole front.

Contact with the Masses—a Law of Bolshevism

I now come to the condition of our Sections from the point of view of organization. Our Sections in all countries have grown politically and numerically. But their organizational growth does not correspond to the growth of our influence, and the result of this may be that the Communist Parties may not be equal to the tremendous tasks which the political situation imposes on them in the matter of leading the masses.

The organizational growth of the sections of the Communist International in countries where the movement is legal is at present being primarily hindered by a number of shortcomings in recruiting new members, in the work of educating them and in building up the Party organizations. This is especially borne out by the so-called "fluctuation," as expressed in the fact that

newly-won Party members either never actually join the ranks of the Party or leave it after a few months. Many of the workers newly recruited by the Party have still inadequate political training and are not sufficiently active and disciplined. The Party organization must devote a great deal of attention to them and train them to become fighting Communists and active Party functionaries. But this is just what the old members often fail to do.

The organizational growth of the Sections of the Communist International in countries where the movement is *illegal* is hampered by police persecution, and by the fear that provocateurs may penetrate into the organization. Yet in the illegal Sections the new members are as a rule better trained, better disciplined and more active. But here, too, big defects are to be observed.

Very often the cells are not political organizations which discuss various political questions, and this state of affairs is by no means occasioned by motives of secrecy. The cells are frequently merely organizations for collecting membership dues or for distributing Party functions.

In many organizations, both in the legal and illegal sections, a veritable *sectarian* fear of an influx of former Social-Democratic workers prevails. In many of the organizations in Germany this sectarian spirit reached such lengths that either special conditions of admission were drawn up for former Social-Democrats, or they were organized in special cells; frequently excessive political demands were also made on them. Such an attitude towards former Social-Democrats bears witness to a complete lack of understanding of the change of spirit that is taking place among the Social-Democratic masses.

This change of spirit is borne out in the case of our Austrian Party, over two-thirds of the membership of which to-day consists of comrades who only a year ago belonged to the Social-Democratic Party, but who are now faithful, devoted and active members of the Communist Party of Austria. And this is true not only of former rank-and-file members of the Social-Democratic Party, but also of former Social-Democratic functionaries. It is with particular pleasure that I here stress the fact that the delegation of our Austrian Section to this Congress to a considerable extent consists of comrades who in February 1934 were still prominent functionaries of the Social-Democratic Party. (*Applause.*) The composition of the Austrian delegation

is one of the best evidences of the decline of reformism and the success of our slogans.

The basic principle of our Party organization is that it must know how to maintain closest contact with the masses and avail itself of every opportunity for organizing the struggle and for enlisting the workers in the struggle. In this it must base itself on the decisive strata of the workers of the most important factories and branches of industry.

I should like here to stress two particularly important groups of tasks in the organizational work of our Parties, tasks that as a matter of fact have been most neglected. They are *work among women and work among the youth*. In this present situation particularly there exist in all countries the most favourable conditions for winning the women and youth for the revolutionary struggle.

The decisive condition for successful mass work of the Communists and for the winning of the masses by the Communist Parties is Communist work in the *trade unions* and in other organizations embracing the working-class masses. Unless influence over the members of these organizations is secured, there can be no question of winning the majority of the working class for the Communist Parties.

There has been a certain increased animation lately in our work in the Amsterdam trade unions in Great Britain, Hungary and Poland and in the American Federation of Labour. This has already resulted in rendering the reformists both in Great Britain and the United States unable to give effect to the instructions of the so-called Black Circular for the expulsion of Communists. In Hungary and Poland our work made it difficult for the fascists to abolish the trade union organizations.

Great initiative has also been shown of late by the Communists in Austria and Germany, who are taking an active part in the *restoration of the free trade unions*. But many Communists still regard the Amsterdam trade unions as the domain of the Social-Democratic Parties and not as their own organizations, not as part of the fundamental organizations of the working class, for strengthening of which we must work in a practical way.

In those countries where the working-class organizations have been smashed by the fascists, the Communists will not be able to extend their influence to the broad working-class masses, unless they utilize every legal and semi-legal opportunity, unless they work in the fascist trade unions in Italy and

Austria and in the ranks of the so-called Labour Front in Germany, and unless they fight in these organizations to win influence over the masses and to lead the masses.

Our slogan in the fight to win the majority of the proletariat for the Communist Party is: *Extend the front, penetrate deeper into the mass organizations!*

The aim of our work within the Party is to *strengthen the Party and to raise the political level of the Party organizations!*

The More Important Sections of the Communist International

I will now proceed to deal with the position of some of our more important Sections.

During the past seven years the Communist Parties have learned to lead millions of people and have gained tremendous fighting experience. In all countries the importance of the Communist Parties has enormously increased. Our Sections have grown in strength.

The *Communist Party of Germany*, our largest Communist Party in the capitalist world, which after the defeat of the German proletariat in January 1933 did not cease its fight against the bourgeoisie for a single day, has been driven underground. It is the largest illegal Party of the proletariat in the history of the working-class movement. In spite of the terror, and overcoming the sectarian views of certain of its leaders, the Party is mobilizing the proletarian masses against fascism and against preparations for a new war and is fighting for the satisfaction of the day-to-day demands of the workers. Despite the assertions of the National-Socialist leaders that they have annihilated Marxism, the Party has shown that while it is possible to destroy the pseudo-Marxism of the Social-Democrats and democratic illusions, Marxism cannot be annihilated. (*Applause.*) There can be no question of the National-Socialist regime being consolidated for any lengthy period of time.

The *Communist Party of Austria*, which only a year and a half ago was a small propagandist group enjoying very little influence, after the bankruptcy of Social-Democracy, became the heir of the best traditions of the Austrian proletariat and its leading party. (*Applause.*) It is successfully combating the survivals of reformism, and is fighting for a united front and for the amalgamation of all the revolutionary workers in a united Communist Party.

The *Communist Party of Spain*, which at the time of the

Sixth World Congress was a sectarian group, consisting principally of people living abroad, has become a compact and mass party, steeled in the fight, and a powerful political factor in the development of the Spanish revolution. (*Applause.*) Its slogans are being taken up by ever larger masses. In October 1934 it already played a great political role in the armed fighting.

Summarizing what has been said regarding these three Parties, it is with great pride that we are able to record the incredible endurance and steadfastness displayed by the Communists in face of a bestial terrorism and the exceptionally important fact that the Communists of Spain and Austria not only fought in the front ranks at the barricades, but also after the defeat, without losing a single moment, revealed to the working-class masses the weak points in the proletarian front, began to combat reformism, and organized a united front of all the proletarians in order to create a firm foundation for future victories.

Our glorious Communist Party of China has during the past seven years stood in the vanguard of the fight of the peoples of the colonies and dependent countries. It has a membership of over 300,000. It has created a Red Army and has won power in a large part of China. (*Applause.*) The successes it has gained show that only the slogans of the Communist International can serve as a guiding star for the toiling masses of the colonial countries. But our Chinese Party has not yet won the majority of the toilers in Kuomintang China. It has still not succeeded in organizing the proletariat of the foremost industrial centres and is faced by the tremendously difficult task of extending the Soviet revolution to the whole of China in the fight against the national bourgeoisie and Japanese intervention.

Another tremendously important event in the development of the revolutionary movement in the colonies is the creation of the Communist Party of India. (*Applause.*)

The Communist Party of France has the greatest successes to record as compared with the Communist Parties of other imperialist countries. It has trebled its membership and by the successful application of united front tactics has become a very important political factor in France. (*Applause.*) Its task is to strengthen the united front of all the toilers against the offensive of fascism and war and on behalf of the day-to-day demands of the working-class masses, to repulse the new attacks

of fascism and to rouse the toilers to proceed from the fight against fascism to the fight for Soviets.

The Communist Party of Great Britain, a small organization compared with the Labour Party, has increased its membership by one-third, has established a united front with the Independent Labour Party and, by carrying on successful work among the masses and by correctly applying united front tactics, has strengthened its position both in the trade union movement and among the whole working class. It supports and fights for the democratic demands of the masses. It supports their desire for a Labour government and at the same time advocates the programme of proletarian revolution as the only way of escape from poverty and want. Nevertheless, the Communist Party of Great Britain has remained a small organization.

The Communist Party of the U.S.A., having overcome the factional struggle, has considerably grown numerically and, as the economic crisis grew in intensity, began to extend its influence widely among the working-class masses, the farmers and intellectuals. But in order still further to strengthen its influence among the working-class masses, the Party itself must grow and must consolidate its positions in the trade union movement. It must fight more vigorously than hitherto for the creation of a broad mass Party of workers and peasants, and a coalition of all the organizations of the toilers against the bourgeoisie.

The Communist Party of Japan, which is carrying on its work amidst an extraordinarily severe terror, has organized the fight against the offensive of Japanese imperialism in a Bolshevik fashion and has given substantial support to the toiling masses of China. But government terror and the activities of provocateurs have seriously weakened the Party. In order to be able to achieve further success, the Japanese Communists must resolutely eradicate the remnants of sectarianism and make real use of all legal opportunities of fighting for the day-to-day interests of the working class. This at the same time is the condition for the political and organizational strengthening of the Party for the purpose of leading the toiling masses in the fight against reaction.

The Communist Party of Poland has not only put an end to the prolonged factional struggle, but, in the period between the Sixth and the Seventh World Congress, has more than trebled its membership; it has extended its political influence and has been able, thanks to its correct fighting slogans, to take the

lead of big mass movements. (*Applause.*) The united front has enabled the Party to come into still closer contact with the masses. It must utilize every legal opportunity and defend the last remnants of the democratic rights and liberties of the toiling people in order to render the masses mature for the fight for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship and to rouse them to the fight for a Soviet Poland.

The *Communist Party of Czechoslovakia* has during these years led big mass movements and has gained in political and organizational strength. Thanks to the good mass work it performed, it was able, in spite of the categorical rejection by the Social-Democratic leaders of all proposals for a united front, to establish a united front with many local Social-Democratic organizations. The results of the parliamentary elections of 1935, in which the Party secured 850,000 votes, bears witness to a big growth in the influence of the Party among the workers and peasant masses. The Party must widely develop the united front against the capitalist offensive, against Czech and German fascism and against war, which is threatening the political independence of the Czech people, and in favour of an alliance with the Soviet Union. At the same time it must wage a struggle against national oppression in the German, Ukrainian and Slovak regions. By organizing fights on behalf of partial demands, the Party must lead the masses in the struggle against the bourgeoisie and in the struggle for power.

And, finally, comrades, a few words regarding the greatest and leading section of our International, the Party of Lenin and Stalin, the *Communist Party of the Soviet Union*. (*Applause.*)

Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has during the period gained new victories of world historical importance, and is conducting a successful fight for the establishment of a classless socialist society. It provides us with a great example of how we must fight and win.

Comrades, only a few of the biggest Parties of our International have been mentioned in the report. To make even a brief report at this Congress on every section would be extremely difficult.

The Leninist Style of Leadership

In general, I should like to emphasize only one point. An increasing number of Communist Parties that at the time of

the Sixth World Congress still represented purely propagandist groups are now being transformed into mass parties and are becoming serious political factors in their own countries. In all the Communist Parties of the large countries, *leaderships* faithful to our principles have been formed who are able, on the basis of the decisions of our Congresses and Plenums, to decide the most complex political and tactical questions, of their countries independently.

This changes the *functions of the Executive Committee* of the Communist International and enables the E.C.C.I. to devote the greater part of its activities to working out the fundamental, political and tactical positions of the international labour movement. In doing this it, naturally, must be guided by the concrete conditions and peculiarities of each particular country, must make it a rule to avoid interfering in the internal organizational questions of the individual Parties and must assist all the parties to strengthen their truly Bolshevik leadership in the matter of agitation and propaganda and in utilizing the experiences of the World Communist movement internationally.

In view of the extraordinary seriousness and acuteness of the present situation, we also consider it urgently necessary that the leading representatives of all the more or less large Sections of the Communist International should take a more active and permanent part in the work of the Executive Committee, its Presidium and Secretariat.

This will result in further strengthening our international leadership and will raise it, and our entire work, to a higher level.

The style and methods of our work change in accordance with the changes in the political situation and with the growth and increasing strength of our Parties. While at the time of the Sixth Congress many of our Parties were torn by internal dissension and factional fights, we are now more united and more solid than ever before. (*Applause.*)

We must give considerably greater scope to our work and now there must not be a single question either of the home and foreign policy of the countries or of the mutual relations between Parties and groups, to which the Communists do not devote their attention and do not adopt a definite attitude in order to exert their influence on the whole course of historical development.

An exemplary instance of this new style of work is provided

by the French Communist Party, which, thanks to the united front and the people's front, has succeeded in organizing the Left parties for resisting the formation of a Right government, and which has rallied large masses of the people in the anti-fascist demonstration of July 14.

The strengthening of the front of the toilers against the front of the frenzied bourgeoisie, the strengthening of the front of Communism against the front of capitalism now depends on the activity of the Communists and on their ability to utilize every change in the policy of the bourgeoisie of their countries, every contradiction among the ruling classes, in order to repulse reaction, fascism and the warmongers.

The Era of the Second International Is Over

The era of the *Second International* is over. The situation in the capitalist countries, the position of world capitalism, which is unable to find a way out of its difficulties or to alleviate the want and hunger of the masses, shows that a new rise, a new blossoming of reformism is already impossible. True, in individual countries the Social-Democratic Parties may be able to strengthen themselves for a brief period, here and there they may still come to power and take part in bourgeois governments. But this would no longer be because the masses still cherish the illusion that this will lead to socialism, but because the masses do not feel strong enough to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie and therefore think that the onslaughts of reaction may be restrained, even though it be with the help of Social-Democratic governments.

The Second International is in the throes of a profound political crisis. It is the crisis of world reformism, provoked by the aggravation of the entire world situation and caused by the regrouping of the masses which has begun, by their swing over to the fight against the bourgeoisie, by their swing towards the revolution.

The crisis from which Social Democracy and the entire Second International is suffering confronts the Social-Democratic workers and all honest Social-Democratic functionaries with the question: *What next?*

We have repeatedly proposed to the Executive Committee of the Second International the establishment of a united front for the purpose of combating the capitalist offensive, fascism and war. Striving not for mere declarations, but for a genuine

struggle, we proposed in 1933 that negotiations should be undertaken between the individual Parties. But the Second International rejected our proposal and declared that negotiations could be conducted only between the two Internationals. In 1934 we proposed to the Executive Committee of the Second International that direct negotiations should be started in regard to concrete common action. Again our proposals were rejected. In 1935, before May Day, we once more proposed to the Executive Committee of the Second International to establish a united front. This time it declared that negotiations could take place between the parties, and not between the Internationals.

What does the Second International want? Whither is it seeking to lead the masses?

One or the other; it is either already unable to act as an international organization, or it is sabotaging the unity of the proletariat. If the leaders of the Second International hope to survive this difficult period for reformism too, if they believe that a favourable situation for reformism will once more return, we declare to the working-class masses that every manoeuvre made by the Social-Democrats in the hope that a favourable situation for reformism will return is vain as far as the reformist leaders are concerned and catastrophic for the working class.

We propose to all Socialists, we propose to all Socialist Parties the only correct and possible way, namely, to march with us, the Communists, in a united front for the fight against fascism, war and capitalism—the fight for socialism.

We propose that all the revolutionary forces of the proletariat should be united in a single revolutionary party based on the tested theoretical and organizational foundations of the teachings of Marx and Lenin.

We, the Communists of the entire world, are confronted by a task of the greatest importance, namely, to see to it by the work of our own Party that no chicanery of the bourgeoisie, that no demagogy of any kind whatsoever should be allowed to dupe the masses who have become disillusioned with reformism—the task of leading the proletariat, on the basis of the united front, into the fight against the capitalist offensive, fascism and war, and of winning the proletariat for the revolution and for the fight for Soviet government.

Comrades, I now come to the last part of my report, which deals with the prospects of world development and the world revolution.

V. THE PROSPECTS OF WORLD DEVELOPMENT AND THE WORLD REVOLUTION

What are the prospects of world development, what are the prospects of the world revolution? The capitalist system has been shaken to its foundations by the development of the general crisis of capitalism, by the world economic crisis, by the increasing revolutionizing of the toilers and by the symptoms of a political crisis that are manifesting themselves in many countries.

The forces of the bourgeoisie have grown weaker; the forces of the proletariat have grown stronger. The relation of forces on a world scale has changed to the advantage of socialism and to the disadvantage of capitalism.

The U.S.S.R.—the Pride and Glory of the World Proletariat

The Soviet Union has become the most powerful and important factor in the world struggle for socialism. While at the time of the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International the U.S.S.R. was still a comparatively weak state, possessing no large-scale industry worth mentioning, to-day the Soviet Union has economically and politically become a strong socialist world power, based on a developed heavy industry and the best modern technique.

To-day, the U.S.S.R. by its whole policy is exerting a daily increasing influence on the fate of world capitalism and on the development of the struggle for emancipation of the world proletariat and the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries. In this steadily-increasing influence of the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union on world development and on the consciousness of the toiling masses in the capitalist countries is expressed the world wide significance of the victory of socialism in a single country, a victory which cannot remain an isolated one but which will lead to the victory of socialism throughout the entire world.

We have not the slightest doubt that the change that has

taken place among the toiling masses, a change that signifies that the masses have turned towards the revolutionary struggle against the capitalist offensive, fascism and war, has been to a decisive degree determined by the successes achieved by the Soviet Union. These successes have demonstrated to the entire world that the working class is capable by its own efforts of building up a new, a socialist society and that socialism is leading the toilers to a happy, free and prosperous life.

The superiority of the new, socialist economic system over the capitalist economic system, the superiority of the new, socialist order of society over bourgeois class society, the striking contrast between the U.S.S.R. and the fascist countries, represent a force which, if the Communists carry on serious and energetic work, is capable within a few years of destroying the mass influence of reformism.

At the same time, the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. proves that the victory of socialism throughout the entire world is inevitable.

On the basis of the colossal advantages of socialist economy, which is backed by the best modern technique and by collectivized agriculture, on the basis of the consolidation of social property, the standard of living and culture of the toilers will continue to rise with extraordinary rapidity, the economic and political power of the Soviet Union will continue to grow and Soviet democracy for all the toilers will be further perfected.

The land of the Soviets will increasingly stand forth to the world as a land of advanced culture and technique, as a land of peace and well-being for the entire people, as a land of democracy and freedom, as a great socialist country, in which every person possesses the opportunity of fully developing his individual gifts and his abilities.

From the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union and the unlimited prospects for the further development of the Soviet Union towards socialism, we derive the certainty that our influence over the masses of the entire world will increase with enormous rapidity, that the victory of socialism will cause the working class of all countries to turn to socialism and will lead to the victory of socialism all over the world.

All that is required is peace, which will ensure new victories for socialism in the U.S.S.R. All that is required is the possibility of enlightening and organizing the toilers in the capitalist countries, all that is required is the energy, strength of will and devotion of the Communists to the cause of the fight for

socialism, to ensure our victory on a world scale in an historically short space of time.

If not quite fifty years were required from the first real bourgeois revolution, the Great French Revolution of 1789, to the time when a wave of bourgeois revolutions swept over Europe, destroying the power of feudalism, not a longer, but a considerably shorter period of time will be required from the victory of the first socialist revolution, the great October Revolution of 1917, to the victory of socialism throughout the entire world.

The Revolutionary Crisis is Maturing

But the capitalist system will not quit the stage of world history without a struggle.

The capitalist system is enfeebled, but capitalism has succeeded in emerging from the trough of the economic crisis. Yet, three years after the trough of the crisis was passed, production in the majority of countries has not attained the pre-war level—despite the great influence which preparations for war have exercised on the growth of production. The contraction of foreign trade as a result of disturbed economic relations still persists.

The tremendous increase in unemployment as compared to pre-crisis days, the extraordinarily depressed standard of living of the toilers, the agrarian crisis in the peasant countries, the exceptionally low level of capitalist investments in industry in the overwhelming majority of countries, the enormously increased parasitism of the state, the seizure by the state of a considerable part of the national income in the form of taxation for the purpose of financing war preparations and maintaining swollen government staffs—all this has severely contracted the home markets of the imperialist countries.

To this must be added the fact that the tremendous increase in strength of the monopolist trusts and cartels, which endeavour to maintain high prices in the home market, prevents the extension of the market and the absorption of commodity stocks and results in the accelerated accumulation of new commodity stocks. Prohibitive tariffs, the destruction of the remnants of free trade, commercial war, dumping, the contraction of the colonial markets, the continued crisis in the colonies and the disturbance of the international credit and currency systems are preventing the restoration of international ties and the growth

of foreign trade. And this sets narrow limits to a possible increase of industrial production and renders extremely difficult any serious improvement in production common to all countries.

The generally strained relations between classes and states, the direct danger of war and the symptoms of political crisis in a number of countries create an uneasy situation inimical to the consolidation of the economic system and to economic improvement.

It follows from what has been said that the general crisis of capitalism, against the background of which the economic crisis is developing, has created a situation in which the conditions inimical to economic development will persist, preventing any serious improvement in capitalist economy and furthering the process of its decay.

Owing to these causes, there prevails in most countries a distinct tendency for the depression of a special kind to be further prolonged, and the short-lived improvement of production, uneven in different countries and branches, will most probably be accompanied by new spells of economic crisis.

This economic situation, which is marked by the continuation of the depression of a special kind and is condemning tens of millions of unemployed in all countries to starvation and extinction, and hundreds of millions of workers, peasants, intellectuals, urban petty bourgeois and colonial slaves to a pauper existence, has still further widened the chasm between the handful of monopolists of finance capital and the major mass of the people, who have been plunged into the abyss of poverty and despair.

Faith in capitalism, in the ability of the leaders of capitalist economy and the state to find a way out of the crisis towards a new prosperity, has been undermined among vast masses of the people. The prestige of imperialism has been enfeebled in the colonies, all the economic, social and political foundations of bourgeois society have been shaken, so that the ruling classes themselves are compelled to resort to anti-capitalist demagoguery.

This is the kind of situation which renders the contrast between capitalism and socialism most striking in the eyes of the masses, the kind of situation in which the struggle of the oppressed against the oppressors will become rapidly accentuated, the indignation of the masses at the capitalist regime will continue to grow, the revolutionary crisis to mature and

the idea of storming the citadel of capitalism to mature in the minds of ever larger masses of proletarians.

It may, however, happen that in certain countries capitalist economy, having removed the conditions inimical to its development, may still experience a temporary improvement and alleviate the condition of the bourgeoisie in these countries. But in view of the accentuation of the general crisis of capitalism, such an improvement of capitalist economy cannot lead to stabilization and to the ebb of the tide of revolution. On the contrary, it will intensify the struggle between the various groups of the bourgeoisie, who will hasten to profit by the improved situation; it will intensify the struggle in the world arena, because the markets are shut off by tariff barriers and because, finally, an improvement in any given country will be achieved at the expense of other countries, which will thus be forced into the background.

All this will aggravate the entire political situation, the war danger will increase, while the uncertainty of the masses as to their immediate future will not diminish. This means, that whatever the course of economic development during the next few years may be, the decay of capitalism has advanced so far that a serious improvement in the condition of capitalism is already impossible. This means that the entire development of capitalism is leading to the maturing of the revolutionary crisis.

The decline of the capitalist system, on the one hand, and the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union and its growing influence among the toilers in the capitalist countries, on the other, are revolutionizing the toiling masses of the entire world and are rendering the position of the ruling classes increasingly uncertain and insecure.

The bourgeoisie feels its weakness and isolation. The power of the bourgeoisie is growing more and more shaky, its reformist social basis is tottering and vanishing. The bourgeoisie is therefore no longer able to retain the democratic mask which helped it to establish its rule; it is compelled to lay this mask aside. The bourgeoisie—by necessity and not of its own free will—is being compelled more and more, and in an increasing number of countries, to strive to maintain its rule by exchanging parliamentary methods for a terrorist, fascist method of government, by robbing the toilers of the last remnants of democratic rights and the right to protect their interests.

Fascism Means War

But the policy of autarchy, of economic nationalism, pursued by the fascists in order to deliver the entire home market to the native bourgeoisie for the purpose of plundering the masses tends to disorganize foreign trade and currency still more. The orientation towards a repartition of the world is intensifying the military yoke, increasingly upsetting state finances, resulting in an increasing part of the national income being seized in order to finance preparations for war and rendering the condition of the toiling masses more and more unfavourable.

The extreme chauvinism of the fascists and the preparations for war being made by the big fascist countries are tending to accentuate chauvinism and the rage for armaments all over the capitalist world.

Wherever the bourgeoisie has succeeded in establishing a fascist dictatorship, however, the eyes of the working-class masses are being opened more and more by oppression, loss of rights, increased exploitation and warmongering to the fact that fascism acts not in the interests of the people but exclusively in the interest of the financial oligarchy. There the discontent of the masses, who have lost their illusions in capitalism and in the democratic path of struggle, is rapidly growing; there, under the shadow of the fascist dictatorship, the indignation of the masses against fascism is growing.

The offensive of the bourgeoisie, its attempts to establish a fascist dictatorship, have already led to a political crisis in Austria, Spain and France. Now, when the worker already knows what fascism has in store for him, the resistance of the masses to the establishment of a fascist dictatorship will daily grow, the discontent of the masses will steadily gain in intensity.

The whole policy of the fascists is tending to strengthen the anti-fascist movement in countries in which remnants of parliamentarism and democratic liberty have still been preserved. This is making it harder for the bourgeoisie of these countries to resort to fascist dictatorship. Thereby the whole imperialist system is being more and more disorganized. Our slogan is —Fight Fascism!

Socialism Means Peace

We are convinced that war can be averted by a joint struggle for peace waged by the proletariat of the capitalist countries and the Soviet Union.

If it becomes possible, by means of the struggle of the Soviet Union and the toilers of all countries, to prevent imperialism starting a new world massacre, and to preserve peace, this will not only be evidence of a tremendous increase in the strength of the proletariat, but will also result in the fact that the building of socialism in the Soviet Union and the increasing contrast between the Soviet Union and the capitalist world will ensure an enormous advance in the revolutionizing of the toiling masses.

If, thanks to the struggle for peace of the Soviet Union and the toilers of all capitalist countries, war can be delayed even for a certain time, this also will better enable the proletariat to strengthen its position in the capitalist countries, to strengthen the power of the Soviet Union and to create more favourable conditions for transforming the war between the imperialists, or a war of the imperialists against the Soviet Union, into a successful and victorious revolution.

However, should the proletariat not succeed in preventing war, the new world war launched by the imperialists will be a war of the imperialist bandits for plundering the peoples of the Soviet Union, for enslaving the small and weak peoples who are to-day independent and for the redivision of the colonies and spheres of influence of the imperialist Great Powers.

The war will entail unspeakable misery for all the toilers. Will the toilers tolerate it?

If the war waged by Japan against the Chinese people has already started a ferment among the masses of the people of both countries and has awakened an urge on the part of the best of the Chinese people to unite for a common fight, shoulder to shoulder with the Chinese Red Army, if Germany's war preparations have started an anti-war movement all over the world, there can be no doubt that the launching of a war by the imperialists against the Soviet Union, or against each other, will lead to an open collision between all the contradictions of the imperialist system and will cause the proletariat of all countries, the toilers of the whole world and whole peoples to intensify the class struggle to the utmost.

The launching of war by the imperialists will mark the beginning of a revolutionary crisis throughout the entire capitalist world.

The task of the proletariat of the world will be to fight for the victory of revolution and for the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war against the bourgeoisie.

Whatever may be the course of future development, it is leading to revolution.

The revolutionary crisis is not yet matured, but it is maturing all over the world. By its frantic preparations for war and its attempts to set up the fascist dictatorship in more and more countries, the bourgeoisie is rendering the situation increasingly acute and accelerating the maturing of the crisis.

The following words of Lenin describe the situation:

"The bourgeoisie is behaving like an insolent robber who has lost his head; it is committing one folly after another, aggravating the situation and hastening its doom. . . . It must now be 'proven' by the practice of revolutionary parties that they possess sufficient clarity, organization, contact with the exploited masses, determination and ability to utilize this crisis for a successful and triumphant revolution."

No social system falls of itself, however rotten it may be. It must be overthrown. No revolutionary crisis can bring victory to the proletariat if the proletariat cannot organize and win victory.

Under the Banner of Lenin and Stalin, Forward to Storm Capitalism

Our task is to organize the toiling masses who are rising against capitalism into a solid revolutionary army of the proletariat and to lead them to storm capitalism.

Our World Congress must strengthen the determination of all proletarians to heal the split in the ranks of the working class, to establish a broad united front which will be capable of mobilizing the widest sections of the people in the fight against the capitalist offensive, fascism and war.

Our World Congress must show the proletariat the way to a single revolutionary party based on the unshakeable foundation of Marxism-Leninism.

We must all of us leave this Congress clearly realizing that the fate of the proletariat and of all mankind depends on us and on our work.

We must leave this Congress clearly realizing that only the overthrow of the rule of the exploiting classes, only the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet government can save the toiling masses from poverty, want and the horrors of capitalism.

In a number of class struggles the proletariat proved to be still too weak, because its ranks were split and because the Communist Parties were still too feeble.

The demand of the hour is to consolidate the Communist Parties, the leaders in the fight for Soviet government. The world situation is extremely acute. Any day we may be faced by great revolutionary events, by the necessity of assuming leadership of a movement of millions of people for their emancipation. We, the Communists, are showing the masses the only road out of the crisis, the road which has been taken by the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, the road of Soviet government.

Our task is not only to point out this road to the masses, but to take this road together with the masses and at the head of the masses.

We are launching into the fight for freedom, for peace, for bread, for Soviet government and for socialism.

Our chief slogan is—Fight for Soviet government!

Our banner is the banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

Our leader is Stalin.

Under this banner, we must penetrate to the masses, we must establish closer ties with the masses, we must broaden the united front of the proletariat.

Communists, weld the revolutionary class into a vast, single, organized political army. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

WILHELM PIECK

REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION ON THE REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Comrades, the discussion of the report of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, which lasted six days and in which sixty speakers representing forty-six countries took part, showed what a tremendous distance has been traversed in the development of the Communist International, the vanguard of the world proletariat, since the Sixth World Congress. In all countries, the Communist Parties have grown stronger and have placed themselves at the head of big mass

movements of the toilers. While at the time of the Sixth World Congress a factional struggle was still being waged within a number of the Sections, to-day the Comintern and its Sections are homogeneous, steadfast and united as never before. The discussion bore eloquent testimony to the ideological and political steadfastness of all our Sections and to the increase of their influence among the masses. (*Loud applause.*)

The report of the Executive Committee has met with the full approval of the speakers from all the Communist Parties. Everything described by the comrades who took part in the discussion regarding the experiences gained in their struggles completely corroborates the correctness of the Bolshevik line of the Communist International, its analysis of international development and the prospects of international development it outlined.

The creation of a proletarian united front and of a people's front of all the toilers for the fight against the capitalist offensive, fascism and war has been made the chief task by all the Sections, and a number of Sections have already been able to register certain successes in the fulfilment of this most important task. But we regret to say that the speakers in the discussion did not sufficiently define their attitude to the international experience described in the report, but for the most part confined themselves to dealing with the events in their own countries and the experience there gained.

In the report of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, the work and the mistakes of our various parties were earnestly criticized. It is true that most of the comrades who took part in the discussion admitted the justness of this criticism, but not all of them by far dealt with the conclusions that must be drawn if their work is to be improved. We hope that the comrades will repair this defect in the discussion on the second point of the agenda, which will deal with the problems of the united front.

It must also be noted that the speeches of certain of the speakers revealed a spirit of self-satisfaction with the successes achieved, and it was not sufficiently explained why in spite of the favourable conditions our influence among the masses was not more firmly established.

Comrade Cachin spoke of the great work performed by the French Communist Party in the fight for a united front of the proletariat and for a people's front of all the toilers against fascism. The tactics of the French comrades have been justified and the Party has achieved big political successes, but these

successes still need to be consolidated. The fascist danger in France is extremely great and we are therefore entitled to demand further successes of the French comrades in the fight against fascism on the basis of the right line which the Party has taken and which sets an example for the whole Communist International.

In France we are on the eve of tremendous struggles, in which the fate of the Third Republic will be decided. Both camps are mobilizing for these struggles, and the victory or defeat of the people's front will be of tremendous import for the whole international working-class movement and for the entire world situation.

The work of our French Party, which has succeeded in arousing and organizing the will to resist the fascist barbarism among the broadest strata of the French people, must serve as an example for all our Parties.

The representative of the Communist Party of Spain, Comrade *Garcia*, gave us a vivid picture of the great October fighting and of the efforts made by the Party to establish a united front of the proletariat.

The fight in Spain is not over. The Party must now develop still greater initiative in organizing the masses and must make still greater efforts to establish a united front with the Socialist and anarchist workers in order to prepare itself for the impending political struggles. Yet, the Communist Party of Spain is still suffering from grave weaknesses. After the armed fighting in October 1934, our comrades in Spain, unlike the Communist Party of Austria, were not able to enlighten the masses as to the mistakes of the Social-Democratic leaders of the fight, to induce large numbers of Social-Democrats to turn towards Communism.

We are absolutely certain that the Spanish comrades, who are on the right road, will be able not only to correct the errors in their work, but also to achieve further and bigger successes.

Comrade *Furini*, in the name of the Italian delegation, expressed his complete agreement with my statement that a change of spirit had set in among the Italian workers. But this is not enough. The work of the Italian Communist Party in the fascist organizations is still weak. But unless it works seriously in these organizations it will not establish contact with the masses. The survivals of sectarian ideas must be eliminated if the work in the fascist organizations is to be better developed. This is all the more necessary because the situation arising in

connection with the impending war with Abyssinia demands that the Party should become the real leader of the working-class masses.

The three comrades from the Chinese Party who spoke here at the Congress gave us a picture of the fighting going on in China and showed us how the Chinese Party is organizing the fight for a Soviet Government under the very difficult circumstances of the fight against their own and foreign oppressors. Their speeches gave us an idea of the great road the Communist Party of China has traversed in the interval between the Sixth Congress and the Seventh, a road that fills the hearts of the Communists of all the world with pride and joy. (*Warm applause.*) The comrades showed us how the Party has grown into a mighty mass organization, how a Red Army was created, and how the new Soviet state was established. They showed us how former workers, peasants, artisans and students have developed into military commanders and statesmen and how, under the leadership of the Party, a people of 450,000,000, downtrodden and martyred by the imperialists, is waging a fight for its emancipation.

The Communist Party of China sets an example for all Communists of the colonies and dependent countries. But apart from the Communist Party of China the Communist Parties of a number of colonial countries have in the interval between the Sixth and Seventh Congress also stood at the head of large mass movements which, however, were defeated by the imperialists. The Parties of these countries must now rally their forces for a new struggle. The Communist Party of Indo-China is stubbornly working for the restoration of its organizations. In order that its work may be successful, the Party, under the present conditions of terrorism and reaction, must utilize all legal opportunities, however slight, which exist even in countries where a colonial regime prevails—such as, for example schools, circles, courses, and so on—in order to carry on the organization and enlightenment of the masses.

A number of other Parties in colonial countries, Parties that are as yet insignificant vanguard groups, must now concentrate their attention on awakening the revolutionary consciousness of the working-class masses and creating cadres of colonial revolutionaries by organizing the struggle for day-to-day demands, however small. The sectarianism which is still prevalent in the Sections of these countries must be eradicated root and branch.

All the comrades who took part in the discussion acknowledged the necessity of working in all the mass organizations of the toilers. We have already heard such acknowledgements of the necessity for mass work at meetings of the Plenum of the E.C.C.I.; nevertheless, this work has progressed very slowly. This can only be explained by the fact that the Communists prefer to work only in revolutionary organizations and consider the small, day-to-day work in the organizations created by the reformist, bourgeois democratic and fascist parties as of secondary importance, not very significant, or even not befitting a Communist. We must very definitely put an end to such views and ideas.

The report of the E.C.C.I. drew attention to the existence of a number of serious shortcomings not only in the work of the individual Sections but also in the work of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. The Executive Committee of the Comintern considers an improvement in its work most essential and important. A number of Sections have submitted proposals designed to improve the work of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, some of which I have already mentioned in my report. The draft resolution drawn up upon the basis of the proposals of the delegations will submit these proposals for your approval.

There have been a number of defects in the work of the Executive Committee. It is not, of course, of serious importance if in certain cases the Executive Committee did not punctually answer some letter or other not dealing with any fundamental political question of our movement. It is very possible that such cases have occurred and that the complaints of Comrade Mueller of the Communist Party of Luxemburg in this connection are fully justified. But far more important are those cases when the Executive Committee delayed in coming to the support of a Section on important political questions. Comrade Campbell particularly, the representative of the Communist Party of Great Britain, dealt in the discussion with these general political defects in the work of the Executive Committee. We want explicitly to state that we entirely welcome Comrade Campbell's criticism. But the criticism does not quite hit the mark. If I dwell on this criticism in some detail, it is only with the purpose of giving more prominence to the questions which Comrade Campbell has raised.

The Executive Committee bears the responsibility for all our shortcomings equally with the Sections. But in its efforts to

strengthen and improve the work the Executive Committee can rely only on the Sections themselves. We have expressly mentioned the serious defect that the Executive Committee was not sufficiently supported in its work by the Sections. The errors and shortcomings in our work can be eliminated only if the best representatives of the Sections permanently participate in the work of the Executive Committee and if the Sections themselves submit the respective matters to the Executive Committee.

Comrade Campbell dealt in particular detail with *trade union work* and the sectarian attitude that was revealed in this work. He asked whether it is right for the whole responsibility for the sectarian mistakes committed in strike strategy and strike tactics to be laid on the individual Parties and whether the Executive Committee took the initiative in proper time in combating the tendency to renounce work in the reformist trade unions.

The sectarian mistakes manifested in trade union work were expressly condemned in the report of the Executive Committee, in which appropriate passages were quoted from the Strassburg resolution. But Comrade Campbell in his criticism did not pay sufficient heed to the fact that the Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Plenums of the Executive Committee of the Comintern expressed its objections to the sectarian tendencies on the trade union question also contained in the Strassburg resolution. I am therefore obliged to quote a little.

In the resolution of the Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., it is expressly stated that Communists "must in no case call upon the workers to quit the reformist trade unions." As regards work in the reformist trade unions, it is stated that "on the contrary, this work must be intensified." Furthermore, the Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. expressed itself quite definitely opposed to the "dangerous tendency to dispense with work in the reformist trade unions," and to any "revision of the decisions" regarding work in the reformist trade unions. In this decision of the Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., the following sentence from Lenin's "*Left-Wing*" Communism is quoted: "In order to be able to help 'the masses' and to win the sympathy, confidence and the support of 'the masses,' it is necessary to brave all difficulties and to be unafraid of the pinpricks, obstacles, insults and persecution of the 'leaders' ... and it is imperatively necessary to work wherever the masses are to be found."*

* Lenin, "*Left-Wing*" Communism *An Infantile Disorder*, pp. 49-50 Moscow, 1935 ed.

In its resolution, the Eleventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. declared that a major weakness in the work of most of the Sections lies "in the opportunist or sectarian underestimation and the neglect of the exceptionally important work in the reformist trade unions."

The Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. also took a sharp stand against anti-trade union tendencies. I quote merely the following passage from the resolution:

"One of the chief causes of the insufficient mobilization of the masses by the Communist Parties and the Revolutionary T.U. organizations in the struggle against the capitalist offensive is the impermissibly weak revolutionary work carried on *inside the reformist trade unions*. . . . The influence of the reformist T.U. bureaucracy . . . cannot be broken down by shouts about wrecking the trade unions, for which Communists are not striving, not by deserting the trade unions, but by persistent work inside the reformist trade unions, by fighting hard . . . for *every elected post* in the trade unions."

I therefore think there is no ground for reproaching the Executive Committee with not having taken the initiative in combating sectarian tendencies in trade union work.

Nevertheless, it is possible that the Executive Committee in certain cases actually did not take up the cudgels promptly and with the necessary vigour against sectarian tendencies manifested in the Party, and particularly in trade union work.

Also, in correcting the resolutions of the Strassburg Conference the Executive Committee was guilty of a certain delay in not immediately changing the formulations which were erroneous, which occasioned great distortions in the work of the Sections and no longer corresponded with the changed situation.

Comrade Campbell complained that the Strassburg resolution, as he states, was "forced" on the Communist Party of Great Britain as *perfectly* correct in all its details and formulations. But the Executive Committee has always given heed to the peculiar conditions prevailing in Great Britain and has drawn the special attention of our British comrades to the fact that in their work the deeply-ingrained trade union traditions in Great Britain must be taken into account and that particular emphasis must be laid on work in the trade unions and on maintaining the closest contact with the workers organized in the trade unions. If Right errors were committed in the work of

the Communist Party of Great Britain and the Comintern had to criticize these errors, this must not be interpreted as countenancing sectarian mistakes.

Now as to the *youth question*. Comrade Browder of the American delegation complained that the youth question was dealt with too briefly in the report of the Executive Committee. He is right. We should have dealt much more fully in the report with the big defects betrayed in the work of our Sections in the matter of winning over the masses of the toiling youth and in supporting our Young Communist Leagues.

Winning over the masses of the toiling youth is a most important task, especially in the fight against fascism and imperialist war. Our Sections in the countries in which legal and illegal conditions of work prevail must devote the greatest attention to winning over the youth and must adopt practical measures which, taking into account the desire of young people to take an active part in sports, culture and politics, are calculated to draw the youth into the united front and to prevent them falling victims to fascist demagoguery.

Our American and French Sections have achieved great results in their work among the youth. The delegations to the Youth Congresses in the United States represented more than one million young men and women. The success of the work of the Young Communist League of the U.S.A. is so great that it may serve as an example to other young Communist organizations. We must, however, point out—and here we are in complete agreement with the American delegation—that the American Party must make every effort to have the success consolidated so that we should not have here what we had in the case of the once powerful unemployed movement, over which the Party had great influence, but which declined because the Party was unable to consolidate this movement organizationally.

In the report of the Executive Committee we mentioned the successes achieved by our Section in U.S.A. But we would nevertheless like to draw attention to the fact, as indeed, the American comrades did themselves, that these successes are still entirely out of proportion to the tremendous tasks which confront the Party in the matter of preventing the further growth of the fascist movement in the United States. We are entirely in agreement with our American comrades when they declare that they must examine their work even more critically and must find methods which will enable them to perform

better and more effective mass work among the workers and farmers than hitherto and thus bar the way to fascism in the United States. The United States of America is one of the most important of capitalist countries, all the greater, therefore are the tasks our Party has to perform in that country.

Comrade *Furini* of the Italian delegation cast very serious reproaches at the Executive Committee of the Young Communist International. He accused the Executive Committee of the Young Communist International of a sectarian attitude, and of having therefore proved incapable of leading the Young Communist Leagues properly. This assertion is undoubtedly exaggerated. But the fact remains that the Young Communist International for a long time did suffer from marked sectarian tendencies which prevented the creation of a youth movement of a real mass character. The situation in the Young Communist International has distinctly improved during the last few years. Nevertheless, the youth movement still does not bear a mass character and still displays strong elements of sectarianism.

Comrade *Andre*, who spoke on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Young Communist International has shown how the Y.C.I. has endeavoured to induce the Young Communist Leagues to carry on real mass work among the toiling youth. His criticism of the sectarian mistakes was absolutely correct, but it suffered from the defect that it did not go beyond general statements and did not criticize the work of the Young Communist International concretely. Neither was a fundamental analysis of the causes of the sectarian mistakes undertaken or concrete proposals made for overcoming these shortcomings.

Of course, the Y.C.I. bears a high degree of responsibility for the weakness of the work among the youth. But we, the Executive Committee of the Communist International, we, the Communist Parties, bear with the Y.C.I. full responsibility for winning the toiling youth for the revolutionary struggle. The Sections of the Communist International must regard the youth movement as one of the most important sectors of their work and must fight to win the masses of the toiling youth for the united front and to train them for the revolutionary struggle.

It is the duty of the Executive Committee to devote its main work to defining the fundamental political and tactical positions of the international working-class movement, and must more than was formerly the case refrain from intervening in the internal organizational affairs of the Sections. Unlike

the Second International, we are a world Party with an iron disciple.

The Executive Committee will, of course, continue to intervene if the work of our Sections betray serious defects. But, I repeat, the main emphasis must be laid on the work of defining the fundamental political and tactical positions of the international working-class movement.

Comrades, the masses are faced with the question: *Fascism or Socialism. War or Peace?*

The issue will depend on the strength of our class, on the work of our vanguard, on the Communists.

Our Sections bear a tremendous responsibility, the responsibility of increasing their influence among the masses in the shortest possible time so as to enable our Sections to lead the masses to the decisive struggle.

We are entering the period in which the split in the ranks of the working class will be healed and we are thus creating in the working class the forces that will be capable of overthrowing capitalism and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The road we are taking is the creation of a proletarian united front, the creation of trade union unity, the creation of a people's front of all the toilers, the creation of a united revolutionary party of the proletariat on the tried theoretical and organizational foundations of the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

We, the Communists, are the initiators and organizers of the broadest fighting front of the workers for peace, freedom and bread and against the front of the exploiters and oppressors.

The creation of such a front is no easy task. We Communists must know how to make ourselves understood by the masses, to speak to them in their own language, to capture the masses and to lead them.

We must learn to lead in a common fight millions of people, holding different views, convictions and outlooks. We must therefore so adopt the style and methods of our work as to achieve the maximum contact with these masses in the shortest possible time.

We Communists must know how to utilize every change in the policy of the bourgeoisie in each country, every antagonism within the ruling classes, in order to repulse reaction, fascism, the war danger and the capitalist offensive.

The workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, led by the

Party of Lenin and Stalin, have shown the way to the workers of the whole world.

The victory of Socialism in the Soviet Union endows us, the Communists, and the masses with the strength to follow this example.

The contrast which Comrade *Popov* drew in his impressive speech in comparing the development of the Soviet Ukraine with the development of the West Ukraine, which is under the sway of the Polish barons, demonstrates in the case of one particular sector the contrast between the two worlds—the world of Socialism and the world of capitalism.

The bourgeoisie is driving towards fascism and war, in order to escape the encirclement of the revolutionary front of the toiling masses. It will depend on us, the Communists, it will depend on the working class whether the bourgeoisie succeeds or not.

Never was the responsibility of the Communist Parties so great and serious as it is to-day.

The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International and its Sections call on the toiling masses to engage in a joint fight for freedom, peace, bread, Soviet Government and Socialism.

Our slogan in the fight to win over the majority of the proletariat is: *widen the front! Penetrate deeper into the mass organizations!*

Our task within the Communist Parties is: *Strengthen the Parties and raise the political level of our Party organizations.*

Comrades, let us fight for the accomplishment of our great historical task: namely, *to achieve the emancipation, the welfare and the happiness of the whole of toiling humanity!* (Loud and prolonged applause. The "International" is sung.)